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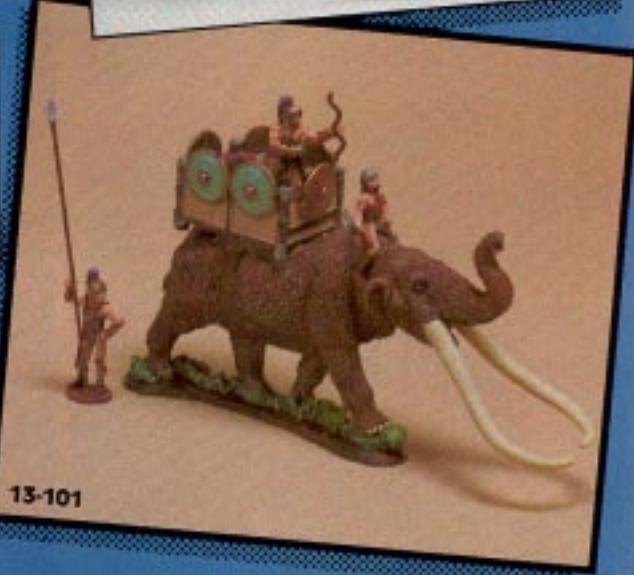
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## The source's mouth

Dear Dragon,

I was wondering what your status with Tolkien Enterprises is. I have heard a rumor that they have a claim filed against you all. Is the reason that all of the back covers of your magazine have their advertisement on it? I was just wondering about the rights you and they have figured out.

(Name withheld)

We get a few letters of this sort every month — people wanting us to confirm or deny a rumor or a claim they've heard somewhere, or just asking a "simple" question: Sometimes it's flattering that you think we would know ("When will the D&D movie be out?"), even though we don't. Other times, the questions are bewildering or even astounding. And on occasion, people ask us things we can answer.

The letter above doesn't fall neatly into any of those categories; it just happened to be in the mail the day I sat down to write this. I'm confused by the question, and by the fact that it's addressed to the magazine, but I guess I can respond to some of it. I'm dismayed by the writer's confusion over what Tolkien Enterprises is, and I'm astounded to hear of a rumor about a "claim" against us.

DRAGON® Magazine has no "status" with Tolkien Enterprises, and I don't understand why anyone would ask about something that has never existed. I don't know anything about a "claim," period. And I'm sure the people at Iron Crown Enterprises would like me to point out that they — not Tolkien Enterprises — have paid us to advertise on our back cover for the last 19 issues.

We can answer questions that pertain to the magazine, but we don't know anything about what's going on in the rest of the company, such as when the new AD&D® game rule book is coming out or how many AD&D modules will be released in the next six months. We're no help at all on rumors — again, unless they have to do with the magazine.

If you ask us a question we can't answer, we might try to forward it to someplace else within TSR, Inc., if we think that'll help. If we're pretty sure that your question doesn't have an answer . . . well, let's just say that we don't take the time to write "I don't know" letters.

But if you have a question you think we can answer, ask it — this is not intended to discourage people from writing. Instead of letting a rumor influence your thinking, it's better to try to get the facts from the source's mouth. If we've got 'em, we'll give 'em to you.





adventure gaming is fun because players can experience an environment through their characters that's exciting and interesting — an environment different from their everyday lives. We were thinking along those lines when we decided to print *WHITEOUT* in this issue.

If you think a different environment does make an adventure better, then wait until the next time the air conditioner breaks down, get out your TOP SECRET® game, and settle down for an evening of subterfuge and snowstorms in Antarctica.

*WHITEOUT* is the latest published adventure from Merle Rasmussen, the game's author. It's a sequel to the story line that he began with *Doctor Yes* (issue #48) and *Mad Merc* (#56) — but, like all good sequels, you don't need number one or number two to appreciate number three. We hope the adventure will please all of you who've been clamoring for more TOP SECRET material, and maybe a few others of you will be encouraged to try that game.

Jack Crane came up with a good idea for a cover and turned it into a colorful piece entitled "The Enchanted Forest." Then he went himself one better by expanding the idea into "The Legacy of Hortus," the illustrated essay you'll find starting on page 31. Have you ever wondered about your snapdragons? . . .

If the characters in your AD&D® game campaign have never ventured into the wide open spaces, Katharine Kerr's advice in "Beyond the dungeon" will encourage you to make the transition to outdoor action and help you do it more easily. Even if you're an old hand at outdoor and wilderness adventuring, check it out; there may still be a few points in this article that you hadn't thought of before.

As a service to those of you who are on summer vacation and might be missing the classroom atmosphere, we offer Shaun Wilson's lesson on the dryad as our latest ecology feature. If you don't learn anything else from it, remember not to chase anything that might end up catching you. This month's AREST™ science fiction section is chock full of all-star stuff, including Kim Eastland's description of the interstellar police in the STAR FRONTIERS® game and the latest in our series of articles on the moon, this one by *Traveller*® game designer Marc Miller.

The second installment of Len Lakofka's deities of the Suel pantheon features a couple of chaotic do-gooders, Phaulkon and Kord, who also happen to be father and son. Especially if your campaign is based in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy Setting, you'll appreciate these guys.

. . . And, of course, there's more inside that I don't have room to write about. But don't let that get you down: if you're headed for Antarctica, you've already got enough to worry about. — KM



## PBM response

*Editor's note: Glenn Holliday of Empire Games sent a letter to Michael Gray at his home address after Mike's "Problems by mail" review/article appeared in issue #85. We received a copy of the letter; excerpts are printed below.*

Dear Mike,

Today we read your article in DRAGON #85. I'm sure you expect and deserve a reasonable response from us.

I think the most important thing to make clear is that our problems have been a thing of the past for some time now. The player whom you mentioned in your article is a happy player in *Realms of Sword and Thunder* today. We have consistently kept to a turnaround time of 2 weeks for realms and 9 days for city positions since Christmas of 1983. We have added many new players since the first of the year, and are planning further expansion.

We think we are a good example of a PBM company being able to deal with its growing pains, and we believe we have been very conscientious about serving our customers and satisfying their problems.

We welcome you, as well as reviewers of any magazine, to participate in *ROSAT* and judge us yourself. We are aware, of course, that DRAGON Magazine carries a tremendous weight in the gaming hobby, and we are very concerned that people don't get a mistaken impression of Empire Games from such an important source.

Glenn E. Holliday  
Vice-president  
Empire Games, Inc.  
Denver, Colo.

*Mike Gray's article was written several weeks before finally being published. We're glad to hear that in the meantime Empire Games was able to solve the problems that the article described. Neither we nor Mike meant any malice toward Empire Games; that company's problems were described in detail because that was the company involved in the specific problem that Mike cited. We hope that our readers understood the general point the article made without paying too much attention to the companies and games that were singled out. — KM*

## Curing a mistake

Dear Dragon,

Kim Mohan's article on healing magic (issue #85) was very interesting and useful; I have, however, one major disagreement.

The article states that a *cure wounds* spell cannot take a character currently at negative hit points to a positive hit point total. It says that the victim must rest at least a week for a *cure* spell to be able to restore hit points, not just stop their loss.

That assertion struck me as odd, and so I read again the appropriate sections in the Players Handbook and the Dungeon Masters Guide. I was not able to find any clause that prohibited a *cure spell* from raising a character's hit point total to above zero. *Cure Wounds* spells are truly useless if a character is dead, but, according to the DMG, a player character does not die from wounds until he reaches -10 hit points.

The correct interpretation, rather, is that a *cure spell* can indeed restore a character to a positive hit point total, as long as that character is alive at the moment the spell is cast. Once restored to a positive point total, a character is still bound by the "Zero Hit Points" section of the DMG: he will be comatose for 1-6 turns and then will be essentially useless for a week thereafter while recovering.

Anthony Ragan  
Los Angeles, Calif.

*I'll defer to Anthony's judgment, which is a fancy way of saying that he's right. I was confused (although I didn't know it at the time) by the second paragraph of the "Zero Hit Points" section on p. 82 of the DMG, and especially the last sentence of that paragraph, which seemed to be saying that only a heal spell was any good when attempting to revive a character with less than 0 hit points.*

*I agree with Anthony's correct interpretation, and I'd go a little farther in explaining it: A character revived after being at 0 hit points or less can be the beneficiary of a *cure wounds* spell (or more than one) during his recuperation, but he won't actually receive the hit points gained in this way until the week of "uselessness" is over. At the end of that week of rest, the character will have gained seven hit points (one per day, for resting) and will also get whatever other hit points were re-bestowed by *cure* spells. Then the character is able to resume normal activity. — KM*

## Spells and rituals

Dear Dragon,

I hope to see more on the DRAGONQUEST game in your magazine. The section on the Enchanter in issue #82 was helpful and interesting; however, I don't agree with the author on Ritual Spell Preparation.

Rule 32.1 states specifically that the adept must state which spell he is preparing before starting the Ritual of Preparation. This indicates to me that ritual preparation is not itself a ritual but a way of turning a spell into a ritual. Ritual preparation may not be invested independently of a spell, and its advantages could only be applied to the spell prepared. Since the ritual is an extended version of the spell, the release of an invested charge would be the same as the release of an invested spell except for the increased cast chance. (As an aside, the Ritual of Investment [32.3] says that only spells may be invested; it does not mention rituals. In a strict interpretation of the rules, a ritual may not be invested.)

What are your future plans for covering the DRAGONQUEST game and its long-delayed supplement *Arcane Wisdom*?

Alan Barclay  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

DRAGONQUEST™ game players should be happy to learn that we've started to put together some plans for publishing the *Arcane Wisdom* supplement to the DRAGONQUEST game in the pages of DRAGON® Magazine. That's not as vague a prediction as it might sound like — unless we run into a difficulty that we can't foresee, we're expecting to get *Arcane Wisdom* (or at least the first installment of it) into the magazine within a few more issues. In the meantime, we'll try to keep you DQ players happy with occasional articles. — KM

## Right and wrong

Dear Dragon,

In the article on the stirge (issue #83), I noticed some differences between the description in the magazine and in the Monster Manual. The manual says "The feathers of a stirge are rusty red to red brown," and it also says, "The dangling proboscis of a stirge is pink at the tip, fading to gray at the base." The picture in the magazine showed the wings to have no feathers and the proboscis is shown as a straight beak.

Mike Peters  
Curwensville, Pa.

Dear Editor:

I'm writing in reference to "The ecology of the

peryton" in issue #82. In this article, the cleric Amhotep says that perytons are not the result of a magical experiment. But in the Monster Manual it says that perytons are the results of a magical experiment. Which is right, the MM or the magazine?

Ryan Nelson  
Turner, Maine

Sometimes, the authors of our ecology articles draw conclusions that are different from assertions in the Monster Manual, but we don't worry about the differences very much as long as they're logically explained. Our illustration of the stirge depicted a bat-like creature with feathers on the crest of its head, but not on the wings. This goes along with the passage in the article about how the stirge cools its body by flapping its wings. If the blood vessels in the wings were insulated from the surrounding air by a layer of feathers, this cooling process would not work as described. A stirge's proboscis can be "dangling" (pointing downward) and rigid at the same time, which is how we tried to portray it — and it must be stiff, or the creature wouldn't be able to penetrate the skin of its victims.

Whether or not the peryton's origin goes back to some "magical experiment" is not terribly important in game terms. Because the article we printed on the peryton offered a logical reason for the non-magical origin of the creature, we decided it was okay to go against the Monster Manual text on this point.

Of course, you're entitled to reject any of the assumptions in our ecology articles if you so desire, but we think they complement the descriptions in the Monster Manual much more frequently than they contradict them. — KM

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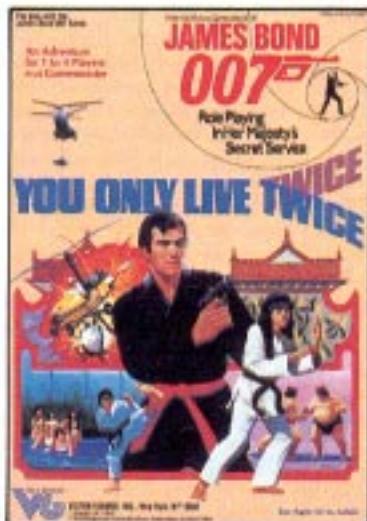
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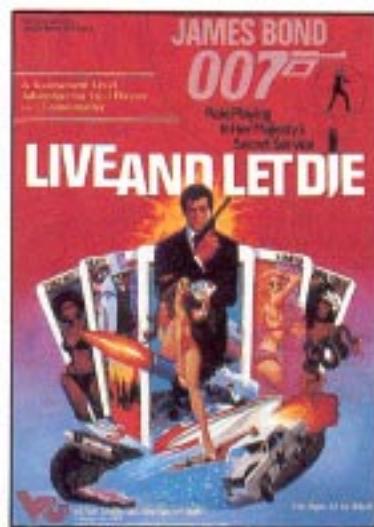
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# The forum

## Opinions and observations

I've been DMing my campaign for close on three years now, and in all that time there has never been a problem that the DMG, DRAGON Magazine, and good old common sense couldn't conquer — until now. My problem is disbelieving illusions.

Disbelief is a thorn in the side of my players, as it is the only effective tool for dealing with high-level illusion, be it generated by an illusionist or a magic item. For example, take the 3rd level magic-user spell *phantasmal force*. According to the spell description, "creatures which disbelieve gain a saving throw versus the spell, and if they succeed, they see it for what it is and add +4 to associates' saving throws if this knowledge can be communicated. . ." Presumably, the character in question must say "I disbelieve the [pit, monster, wall of flame]" after which they roll their normal saving throw to escape the effects. So far, so good.

But what if they try to disbelieve the effects of the spell after it has already dealt damage to them? Suppose a fighter character, having fallen into an illusory pit and taken several hit points damage, states disbelief and tries for a saving throw. If the throw succeeds, will that erase the damage already done?

For the *phantasmal killer* spell, the intelligence of the victim becomes a factor, whereas for the *shadow monsters* and *demi-shadow monsters* spells, the regular saving throw is applied. For

many illusions, "special" is the only entry under "saving throw"; to deal with this, I have been asking players to roll 3d6 and score lower than their character's intelligence to successfully disbelieve an illusion. Should a regular saving throw also apply in the "special" cases, or what?

Lastly, another DM I know insists that disbelief is automatic, while I maintain that the character in question must state disbelief, and furthermore, once a character fails to see an illusion as merely phantasmal, he or she cannot ever be shown the true nature of that particular illusion.

Is there some rule of thumb that can be applied to the various sorts of illusions and phantasms? Have I completely missed the boat on something obvious?

David W. Sisk

\* \* \* \*

In DRAGON #84, Edward R. Masters wrote about the elemental planes. Having watched articles on the other planes come and go since issue #42, I have been sorely disturbed by some of the factors Edward points out; no one seems to think about (or at least write about) how the planes are arranged in relation to each other, or how matter arranges itself on those planes — is Elysium an endless flat plane, extending in all directions infinitely? If so, where does sunlight come from (since the sun can't go around an

infinite plane)? If not, how in the world does Elysium look?

Thanks to courses in metaphysics and calculus, I've found some possible answers. First of all, the inner planes are not arranged in a literal cube, nor are the outer planes arranged in a circle with up to 665 (in the case of the Abyss) planes hanging off the bottom. These shapes are existential — shapes which are more than unfounded concepts, but which are not exactly "real" in the physical sense. To use mathematical terms, the planes of existence are sets of infinite sets, which works like this:

Imagine taking the number 1, and adding 1 to it, to get 2. Then add another 1 to get 3. Now imagine doing that forever, so that the set of numbers reaches to infinity. Now add to this infinite set another set of numbers. This set starts with the number 2 and adds 2 to it each time to get another member of the set. Both sets go to infinity, even though the numbers in the second one are twice as large.

This is similar to the relationship between the planes; when you have one plane, it's infinite (unless you want to say that planes are limited in size, which presents a host of problems). When you have two planes, both are infinitely large, yet having two is twice as much as having one, and even though you can't see them in their entirety, they can easily be seen to be different from each other. This difference between "big" and "little" infinities explains how the para- and quasi-elemental planes can exist (if they are the edges and points of an existential cube); they are smaller than the primary elemental planes, but are still infinite.

This concept of different-sized infinities also explains another inconsistency in the layout of the outer planes. Presumably, the outer planes are balanced so that law equals chaos and good equals evil, but there are 666 planes in the Abyss and only Seven Heavens! Now we can explain this (without limiting the size of the planes) by saying that the Heavens are much bigger than the planes of the Abyss — even though all of them are infinite.

We are further aided by the relationships of the other planes to the Prime Material. Because all of the elements are part of the Prime Material plane, the sum total of all the elemental planes must exactly equal the size of the Prime Material plane. Similarly, because all alignments are subsumed in the Prime Material, the sum of all the outer planes is also that of the Prime Material. (The Astral plane is considered an outer plane, while the Ethereal plane is considered an elemental plane for this purpose.)

While we can accept the layout of the rule books give us for the outer and inner planes in relation to each other, that does not tell us how matter arranges itself on those planes. To solve that problem, we take into account that (at least in Earth's universe) matter tends to form itself into spheres, which move in elliptical orbits around centers of gravity (usually other spheres, like the sun), and from this we can conclude that all of the other planes of existence have planets.

There was one more problem which Edward voiced, and which is very important — what do the elemental planes look like? Are they just abstract fields? The answer lies in what the four elements represented to alchemists (ether is referred to as an element in many alchemical texts, but they are vague about exactly what it is). Alchemists weren't dumb — they didn't think that everything was made of dirt, hydrogen dioxide (water), an impure gas (air is about 78% nitrogen, 20% oxygen, and traces of other assorted gases), and the rapid oxidation of those

(Turn to page 16)

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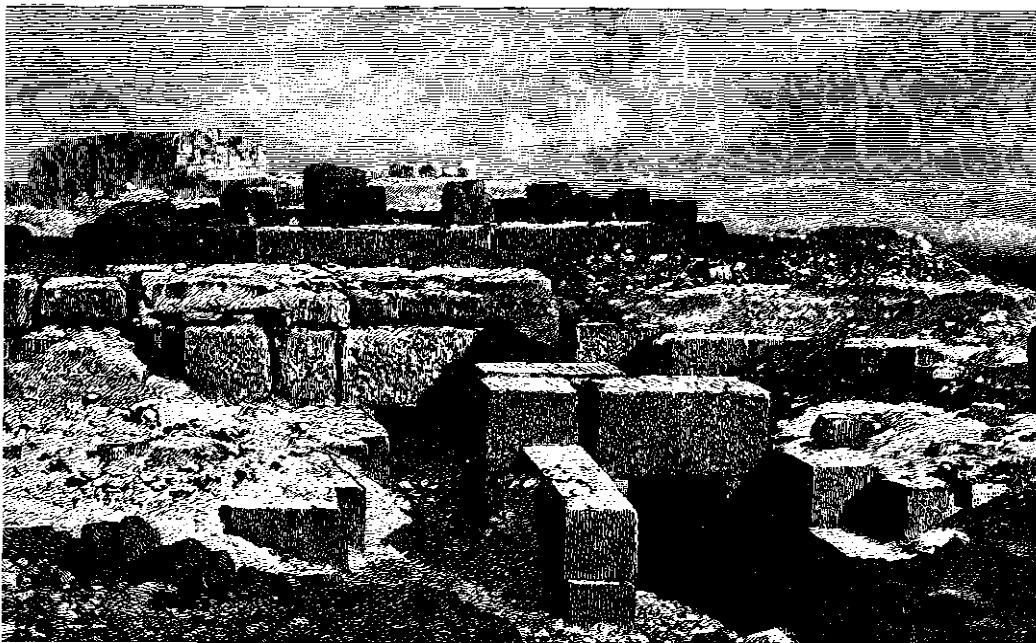
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# Beyond the Dungeon

## How to cope in the greatest adventure of all: Part 1

by Katharine Kerr



Most of the people who play the AD&D® game start their playing careers in dungeons. At first, these underground complexes are so much fun that the gaming group makes them the center of play. The rest of the game world exists only as a place to get supplies for dungeoneering or as a refuge when things get too hot to handle underground. Sooner or later, however, a sad truth becomes obvious: dungeons are getting boring. If the players have any skill at all, they've learned how to clean out the average dungeon quickly and efficiently. They might know the weak spots of the standard monsters so well that they greet the appearance of yet another dragon with yawns.

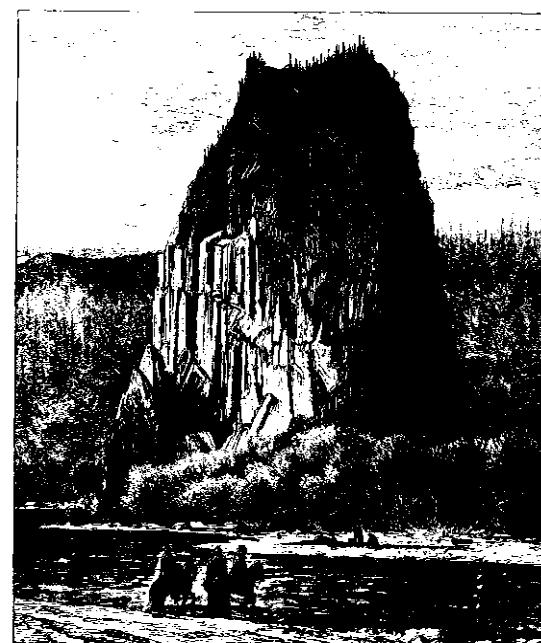
At this point, the DM has two choices. He can desperately invent more (and more exotic) monsters, dream up more fiendish traps, and pile up the treasure in an attempt to keep the game interesting. Unfortunately, all of these things are only variations on the familiar theme. The better choice is to get up on the surface of the game world and start a full-fledged campaign. A good campaign world offers a vast variety of genuinely new situations to explore, ranging from unusual types of terrain to intricate political set-ups. Here the DM is a creative force, not just a bookkeeper for mindless monsters.

As any experienced DM knows, however, playing beyond the dungeon also involves some real problems, ones which novice

DMs can find utterly bewildering. The whole dungeon set-up is really as stylized as the game board for chess or backgammon. Leaving it behind means playing a new and different game. Consider a scenario, for example, where the goal of the player-characters is to find a magic item lost in a forest that contains a number of hostile monsters and other dangers. On the surface, this scenario has much in common with a dungeon adventure, but it immediately raises some different questions. How fast can the party move in a forest? How far ahead can they see? Where are the monsters' lairs since there aren't any convenient rooms? And just how does the party map a forest, anyway?

The official rules give few answers to these and similar questions. In the AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide there's a curious "gray area." Dungeon play, of course, is discussed in great detail. Likewise, there are excellent rules for long-distance travel. What's missing is the middle ground, where the actual turn-by-turn adventure takes place in a non-dungeon setting, like the forest in our example above.

This article is an attempt to fill in part of that gray area by offering practical advice about running and creating non-dungeon adventures. Since some readers of DRAGON Magazine get confused about the status of material presented here, let me state now that this article has no claim whatsoever to be considered "official rules."



In fact, experienced DMs may find some of these suggestions rather unorthodox. All of them are based on personal experience, and are offered only in the hope that other DMs will find them useful, or at least thought-provoking.

Some of the material is slanted particularly for the beginning DM, who all too often is left to flounder alone with the rule books. It's sometimes hard for experienced gamers to realize that certain "obvious" principles and techniques are deep mysteries to the absolute novice. Certain sections of the article, therefore, are labeled for beginners, and more experienced players can skip over them if they prefer.

### Moving through a wider world

When it comes to running a non-dungeon scenario, one of the first problems the DM encounters lies with the movement rates for player characters and monsters. The basic rates given in the AD&D rules seem to assume that the persons moving have decent level footing and are able to take each step freely. A moment's thought shows that in non-dungeon settings, such assumptions might well be invalid. Consider, for example, a character climbing a steep hill or one fighting while waist-deep in water. Their movement rates should differ from those of characters walking down city streets or engaging in normal combat.

Let's break down the AD&D movement rules in order to examine them more closely,

Since the outdoor travel rates are based on turns of one full day, we will leave them aside. Basically, we find three rates given: 1) *very slow*, for dungeon mapping, where each "inch" of movement rate corresponds to one foot of actual movement during one minute's time; 2) *medium*, for following a known route in a dungeon (1" movement rate = 5' actual distance); and 3) *fast*, for fleeing in a dungeon, walking through a city, or engaging in combat (1") movement rate = 10' actual distance). Thus, if a



character with a movement rate of 12" is mapping a dungeon, he will cover only 12' in one minute, but he will cover 120' a minute on a street.

Although these rates cover movement in dungeons quite well, they are inadequate for the myriad of situations that can occur aboveground. There are times when the DM can make a correlation between the dungeon situation that the rules cover and some new outside situation. For instance, a character creeping slowly and cautiously through a forest might be considered to be in an analogous situation to one mapping a dungeon. Unfortunately, other situations defy such analogies, such as a character running full tilt downhill.

In unusual circumstances, the DM has to make up a new movement rate appropriate to the conditions in which the moving will be done. The easiest starting point is the *fast* rate given above, because everyone is familiar with strolling down a city street. The DM can extrapolate from this known pace, deciding what factors would make characters move either faster or slower than they would on a street. These penalties or bonuses can be subtracted or added in increments of 10' a minute, using the *total* move per minute (that is, 120' for a 12" character) as a base.

The three main factors to consider are the steepness of the terrain, the amount of available light, and the presence of obstacles. Moving uphill slows movement, while

moving down increases it. Likewise, groping along in the dark is always slower work than strolling in broad daylight.

Obstacles are things like boulders, trees, or crowds of people which require characters to pick their way through or dodge around them. In a forest, for instance, part of the characters' actual movement on any given turn will be sideways, not straight ahead, as they twist and turn around the trees. Thus, the total distance covered in a turn will be less than that covered in one

slope and the obstacles would subtract only 60' from his base rate, allowing him to stagger uphill at the rate of 30' a minute.

Situations will arise in play where the players argue that their characters can move faster through obstacles than the DM is willing to allow. For a change, these player squabbles can give the DM a bit of fun. The DM should point out that the determined rate is the *safe* rate and give the players the option of going faster — at their own risk. To return to our second example



turn on open ground. Another kind of obstacle is poor footing. Soft sand, mud, or slippery surfaces will also slow a character down.

All of these reductions to the movement rate are cumulative. For example, consider an unencumbered character with a movement rate of 12", giving him a basic stroll rate of 120' a minute. Now, suppose this character is climbing a steep, boulder-strewn hill in the dark. The DM decides that the pitch of the slope takes 30' off his move, the darkness another 50', and working his way through the rocks another 30', for a total move of only 10' a minute. Although this rate might seem slow, consider what it's simulating: a man half-crawling through unseen obstacles, pausing often to catch his breath and grope around him, and every now and then simply running into an impassable obstacle that forces him to backtrack.

By using this method, the DM will find that in certain circumstances the movement rate is reduced to zero or below, meaning that in these circumstances the terrain is impassable. If the character in our example were so encumbered that his rate was already reduced to 9" (90' a minute base rate), the DM's reductions of 110' would leave him with a minus number. The player of this character would then have to make the interesting choice of leaving some of his gear behind or waiting to make the climb in the daylight, when the reductions for the

*A well-rounded campaign world offers a variety of new situations to explore. Get up on the surface of the game world and adventure outdoors. The above scenes which depict desert ruins, mountains, forests, and snow-covered lands can be idea starters.*

above, suppose the encumbered character insists on climbing the hillside in the dark. The DM should allow him to try, but also should set a high percentage chance that he will fall. Each fall does damage, of course, as the character rolls and smashes into one of the boulders.

In some circumstances, however, the DM's ruling on movement will have to be final. If a character is so encumbered, for example, that his movement rate is already reduced to 3", there is simply no way that this character will be able to climb a rope ladder up a cliff or move in any other equally difficult situation. In this example, if the character insisted on trying the climb, the DM could say something like: "Your arms simply won't pull you up past the first rung," and leave it at that.

Although most outdoor situations are so complex that the DM will have to determine movement rates on the spot, the following table offers some suggestions for standard reductions and bonuses.

## Movement factors

Situation	+/- feet per minute
Gentle slope or stairs down/up	..... +/-10
Steep slope or stairs down/up	..... +/-30
Ladder, down or up	..... -30
Mountain-style rock climbing, down or up	..... -60
Light underbrush or tall grass	..... -10
Thick forest	..... -30
Chaparral or jungle	..... -60
Swamp or bog	..... -60
Water-slick footing	..... -40
Ice	..... -60
Mud or soft sand	..... -30
Pavement or wood floor	..... +20
Wading through shallow water	..... -20
Wading through deep water or snow	..... -60
Obscure light	..... -20
Total darkness	..... -50
Working way through a crowd	..... -60
Picking way along narrow ledge	..... -60

Running offers its own problem outdoors, too, because the rate for fleeing in dungeons assumes the presence of many obstacles, such as doors, furniture, twisting corridors, and the like. In contrast, a run across open terrain will be much faster.

The following system is easy and works well in play to determine how fast characters can run. The DM first determines the

walking pace for the specific conditions, then multiplies it by four for the first minute of the run, three for the next ten minutes, and finally two for the rest of the run, if indeed it continues that far. This system represents that first burst of real speed, not sustainable over long distances (except by experienced long-distance runners) that occurs when someone takes off at a run.

## Movement (for the novice DM)

One of the real advantages of the dungeon — from the DM's point of view — is the way that stone walls and corridors channel movement, forcing both the PCs and the monsters to follow certain invariable routes. Thus, the DM has an easy time of keeping track of everyone's location and of deciding the travel routes for the monsters and NPCs under the DM's control.

Once the action shifts aboveground, characters can move in any direction at varying rates of speed. The PC party has a large number of choices about how to approach a given obstacle, and the countering movements of the monsters will depend on those choices. What's more, out in open country both PCs and monsters may have to split up their parties for any number of reasons. The novice DM can easily get so confused that he loses control of both his monsters and his players — I've seen it happen to several young DMs.

Here are three pieces of advice for beginners faced with a group of monsters and

strong-willed PCs who insist on running all over the map.

First, plan ahead. Although the movement of the monsters is dependent in a large degree on the action of the PC party, the new DM should take the time to work out some probable courses of action for the monsters when the PC party confronts them. If the monsters are guarding something, for instance, the DM should decide which monsters will make a stand, which may try to circle around behind the PC party, and which will run for help. A few notes on such possibilities will save a lot of playing time.

Second, use figures or some other kind of marker. Markers are the only way to keep track of dispersed groups of characters without endless squabbling over who is or was where. These markers, however, need not be expensive figures. A DM who lacks a large backlog of figures can make a perfectly playable mass of enemies by cutting cardboard into  $\frac{1}{2}$ " squares. Each square should have an arrow, pointing to the middle of one side, to indicate in which direction the figure is facing, and a number, which corresponds to a set of statistics in the DM's notes.

Finally, keep control of the players. In a dungeon, if the players all babble at once that their PCs are moving forward, the DM can understand them well enough, but out on a hillside, say, with everyone on a different part of the battle board, the confusion can be infuriating. The novice DM should strictly enforce the rule that the players move their characters one at a time in the order in which the players are seated at the table.

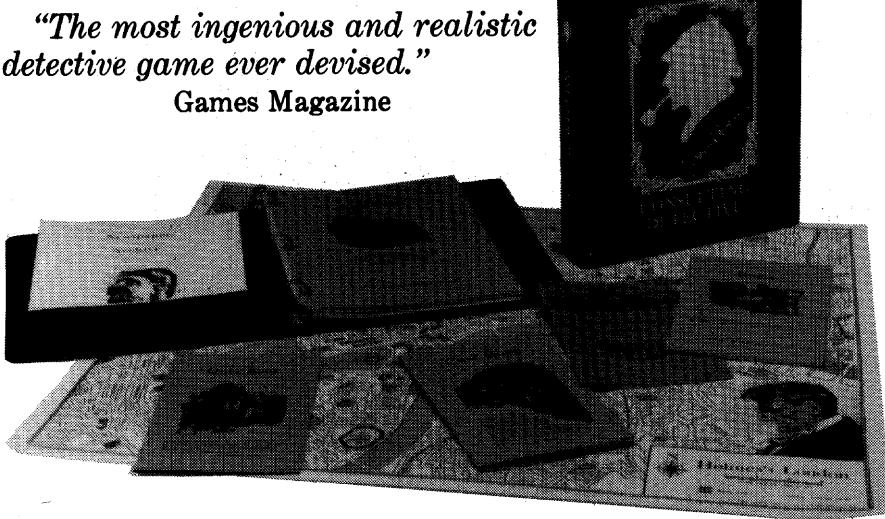
## How long is a non-dungeon turn?

Breaking down the movement rate into single minutes allows us to address another important question about non-dungeon adventures: just how long is the turn? In the AD&D rules, there are three units of time: the 1-minute combat round, the 10-minute dungeon turn, and the day-long travel turn. Although there's no need to change the travel and combat turns, the basic "move and explore" dungeon turn needs modification when adventurers are up on the surface.

The length of the 10-minute turn is really centered around the convention of mapping. Automatically it allows enough time per move for the PC party to have mapped without having to play through every detail of the process. No one plays by saying: "Now I'm dipping my pen in the ink and unrolling the map, while the fighter is packing off the length of the room. . ." Any PC actions called to the DM are assumed to be taking place after the room is mapped.

Once outside the dungeon, however, the mapping process changes drastically (as we'll see later), to the point where the PCs may not even be mapping at all. In such cases, more actions can be undertaken in ten minutes than the DM can judge all at once. For instance, in a familiar city, a PC

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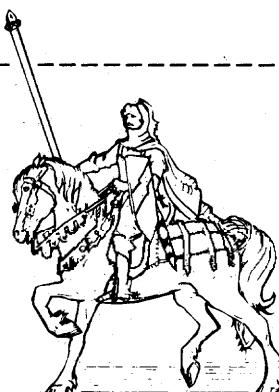
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could walk a block, turn into a tavern, meet a friend and order ale, then insult a stranger and start a fight — all in ten minutes.

In my experience, a turn of five minutes works better in situations where no mapping is taking place. Although it breaks the action down into conveniently handled segments, it's still fast-moving enough to keep the game from dragging.

There are other times, too, when the DM might consider using the 1-minute combat round as the turn, even when actual combat isn't taking place. This turn length is appropriate in stressful situations involving a chance of injury to the party — in a sense, combats with the environment. For example, a PC party is trying to ford a fast-flowing, deep river by hanging onto a rope. At any moment, all sorts of nasty things can happen: a PC might trip, the rope might break, or a monster might attack. It makes sense to play this kind of action out slowly, a minute at a time, rather than making one rough ruling that each PC did or did not reach the other side safely.

The 1-minute turn is also useful when a party or PC is exploring a small area under a time limit or some kind of pressure. If a thief, for instance, is trying to find a single object in a crowded room, and if guards might burst in and discover her there, the DM could build suspense by playing minute-by-minute. Novice DMs, however, should use this turn length sparingly until they have lots of experience. Overused, it drags play out so long that the scenario becomes boring.

Under certain conditions, the DM might also consider using a turn length of one hour. If the PC party is traveling across a stretch of terrain that's potentially dangerous to them, or if they are searching it for something fairly large, the one-day travel turn goes by so fast that it destroys the illusion of searching or facing dangers. On the other hand, a five- or ten-minute turn can make the session drag badly. In this case, a turn of an hour adds suspense while passing time fairly quickly.

#### Who can see what?

A salient feature of dungeons is that they're hard to see in. In the darkness, PCs can only see as far as their torch, lantern, or infravision will allow. What's more, the PC's range of vision is severely limited by the stone doors, walls, and corridors of the dungeon itself. The DM, therefore, has no problem with determining what the party can see at any given moment and can describe things easily. The DM can also plan many a nasty surprise because visibility is so limited.

Outside in the sunlight, none of these restrictions apply. The PCs can see the full distance of their normal vision, modified by weather and terrain. Furthermore, they can move freely around in order to give themselves a better view of something. For example, if the PC party is approaching a castle on a hill, not only will they get a rough idea of its defenses from a good

distance away, but they'll be able to see enemies coming long before the enemies can make a strike at them.

Too many DMs, experienced ones as well as novices, hate to accept these new conditions. I've heard DMs make up the most unreasonableness "reasons" to prevent their players from undertaking normal scouting and looking around in outdoor settings, simply because they were trying to cling to dungeon-based habits. If any DM is forced to plead that it's more fun if the party is surprised, then the DM has done a poor job of planning the scenario.

For example, I remember watching one game where the PC party was crossing a stretch of grassland to reach a ruined town. Although they were miles from any sea-coast, a pea-soup fog suddenly enveloped them and made it impossible for them to see. Out of this fog came — you guessed it — an ambush party of orcs. The players were justifiably furious with the DM for this clumsy ruse, especially since the ruins themselves would have been a perfectly logical place to lay an ambush. The DM's only defense was that he'd set up a chance of ambush before they reached the ruins, and so the dice had made him do it.

Such a defense, of course, is no defense at all. It's up to the DM to think out questions of surprise in advance and to work with the terrain in the way that the actual monsters would work. In our example above, for instance, the party of orcs could have made a night raid on the PC party's camp. Such a sneak attack would be consistent with orcish thinking and would have taken advantage of their superior night vision, too. Since there are no closed doors and twisting corridors outdoors, the DM simply cannot run such scenarios like he would in a dungeon.

For random encounters in the outdoors, whether or not the party is surprised will depend on the type of terrain through which they are traveling. Let me note in passing, for the sake of anyone who may have forgotten, that page 49 of the DMG has rules to determine surprise and its effects in non-dungeon situations. There is, therefore, no need to go into it here.

Aside from questions of surprise, however, there's no doubt that increased visibility presents problems in non-dungeon adventures, simply because it's hard to determine exactly what a PC or monster can see at certain points. Consider, for example, PC party approaching a temple sitting in a meadow. From a great distance away, they can see that a building sits there. When they're within a mile, they can also tell by the architecture that it's a temple. But how close should they be before the DM describes the cursed runes and sigils on the door that mark it as an evil place, dangerous to approach?

The answer, unfortunately, is "it depends." There are so many factors to take into account when determining visibility that drawing up hard and fast rules is impossible. What follows is only a set of guidelines, meant to be fleshed out with common

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sense. Whether or not a given object is visible depends on the availability of light, the presence of obstructions, and the distance of the object from the viewer. The DM will have to juggle all three of these factors when making a final decision.

Furthermore, the amount of attention that a viewer is paying also plays a part in visibility. If a scout is actively scanning a hillside for enemies, she will have a better chance of spotting them than if she were preoccupied with her own thoughts. Although this may seem like a small point, paying attention to detail is the mark of a good player, and thus should be rewarded (or its lack penalized) by the game. What the AD&D game system needs is a skill like the "Spot Hidden Item" skill in the *Rune-Quest®* game, one that could be used by any class of player in these situations. Until and unless something like this concept is added to the rules, the DM will have to make his own arbitrary ruling on matters of paying attention.

Terrain greatly influences visibility. In a jungle or a rain forest, the visibility is worse than in a dungeon — even in full daylight. The foliage is such a tangled, dense mass that characters cannot see more than 20 feet in any direction, and beyond 10 feet only large moving objects will be clearly visible. If the light is poor, characters will only be able to see what is immediately ahead of or beside them. (Anyone who doubts this should talk to soldiers who've fought in

jungles, like parts of Vietnam.)

In thick forest, (oaks, maples, and so on with underbrush), visibility improves somewhat to about 40 feet. The same limit applies to chaparral and scrub, but in some places such cover will thin, allowing brief glimpses at a longer range. In open forest, (birches or conifers, or tended parkland), visibility opens up to 80 feet in good light.

In plains, deserts, and snowfields, visibility technically extends to the horizon, but the DM should keep in mind the effect that sunlight glaring on snow or sand will have on vision. Since polarized sunglasses don't exist in fantasy worlds, characters will have to cover or shadow their faces and squint against the glare. They will be able to see clearly for only half a mile.

Out in normal open country, light is the biggest determining factor. On a cloudy, moonless night, obviously the conditions are the same as in dungeons: no one can see anything without a light source, infravision, or ultravision. If the night is starry, however, characters will be able to make out large shapes, particularly if those shapes are moving, out to a distance of 100 yards.

Moonlight increases visibility up to 300 yards, but the objects seen will lack detail and color, and very small objects will be overlooked unless they are shiny. Very large objects, like a dragon or a hill, will be visible as silhouettes from a mile or two away. At twilight and just before dawn, the PCs will be able to see clearly up to 100 yards and obscurely up to 300 yards. Again, dragons, hills, and so on will be visible from a much greater distance.

Weather also plays a part in visibility. Heavy fog, rain, and snow obscure vision just like twilight, unless the fog is a real "pea souper" or the snow is a blizzard. In those cases, the PCs will only be able to see about 100 feet ahead of them. Even very large objects will be hidden by this kind of weather. Smoke in the air will obscure vision like a light fog or heavy fog, depending on how much of it there is.

These reductions in visibility are *not* cumulative, unlike reductions in movement rate. The shortest range will always apply. For instance, at twilight in a forest, the PCs will be able to see only 40 feet, not 100 yards.

In full daylight in open country, the problem becomes so complex that simple rules are useless. The best thing the DM can do is to look at the world around him. It's a good exercise for any DM — especially novices — to estimate the distance between various objects or buildings in the campaign environment, and notice exactly what details are visible from what vantage points. After a little practice, he will then be able to decide just how much information to give the players when describing a setting.

#### Mapping the adventure (for the novice)

One of the most convenient conventions of dungeon play is the graphed map that players make as they explore, one small step at a time. It's so convenient, in fact, that

leaving it behind is one of the hardest transitions for both players and DM when they begin to play beyond the dungeon. A dungeon map is simply too stylized to transfer over to more open and natural settings.

Let's look at exactly what the graphed map provides. First, it's a record of the PCs' route for the players, and it tells the DM at a glance exactly what parts of the terrain the party has explored so far. Second, the graph acts as a calculating device to determine movement allowance and lines of sight. Finally, it may double as a battle board during combat.

In a non-dungeon adventure, no single map can perform all these functions. Different parts of the scenario will require different scales of distance and rates of movement, and too much of the setting will be visible at one time for the map to be drawn in small increments. The DM and the players will use several different kinds of maps during an outdoor adventure. One type, drawn by the DM to a fairly detailed scale, provides either a setting or a battle board for important points of the scenario; another, drawn by the players, provides them with a record of their characters' route(s) and what they've found along the way.

Let's consider the player-made maps first. The usual procedure is to adapt the travel system of mapping — that is, the players use hex paper, filling in each hex as they travel across it and the DM describes what it contains. For small-scale adventures, this system has to be used loosely, because visibility will vary widely during the course of the scenario.

For example, suppose a party of PCs is tracking down a murderous warg that lives in a wild area near farmland. At first, the party walks across farmland and can see the forest edge, looming a mile away. Rather than waste time by describing hex after hex of farmland, it makes sense for the DM to draw the forest edge directly on the party's map. After all, the PCs can see it clearly. Once the party enters the forest, however, and visibility shrinks to forty feet, the DM can return to describing the terrain that the PCs actually cover in a turn.

The scale of these player-made maps depends on the amount of territory the PCs will have to cover in an adventure. (If each hex covers too small an area, then the finished map will be enormous and unwieldy, but if the area's too large, then there will be no room for the players to note important details.) If the territory to be mapped covers two to four square miles, a scale of one hex to two hundred yards works well, provided the hexes themselves are large enough to contain notes. For smaller areas, one hundred yards per hex will produce a nicely detailed map.

These player-made maps, however, should never be as precise and detailed as a dungeon map, mostly because precision no longer matters outdoors. Basically, a PC party makes a map to record the way out of the mess they're in and to make notes of

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possible treasure to be picked up after the fighting's over. What counts on their map is the relative position of important features and the travel time between them. The position of every tree in a forest or every twist and turn of a stream is unnecessary.

Precise details do count during the combat and treasure-seeking phases of an adventure. Every tree in a forest does become important if that tree might provide shelter from an arrow-shot or hide a piece of treasure. It's at this point that the map becomes a battle board — that is, a display of the area in which combat or other important actions will take place in short turns or rounds. This display has to include every important feature of the terrain, as well as be drawn in a large enough scale to allow the DM to regulate the movement of PCs and monsters.

For the main points of the scenario, the DM has to plan ahead and have the battle boards drawn up, ready to be unrolled at the proper time. Since combat is so exciting, it's frustrating in the extreme to have play grind to a halt while the DM sketches out a battle board. The DM is likely to rush the job and make mistakes, too. A good (and cheap) method is to use big sheets of newsprint and draw the terrain with colored pencils or crayons — green for trees, gray for rocks, blue for water, and black for man-made features.

The scale of the battleboard will depend again on the area to be covered, but in

general, the more detail available, the better. The ideal scale is 1 inch = 10 feet; any other scale should be based on increments of 10 (1 inch = 20 feet or 30 feet), because a scale based on 10 translates perfectly into the combat movement rate.

In fact, here the AD&D game's movement system reveals its origins in table-top wargaming. If a character has a movement rate of 9", for example, and the battle board has a scale of 1 inch = 10 feet, then voilà! The figure representing that character may move 9 inches across the battleboard in one combat round. If the scale is 1 inch to 30 feet, then the figure may move 3 inches, and so on. The DM can borrow another tip from table-top battles and have a number of clear plastic rulers on hand for the players to use in measuring out their figures' moves.

There's one common gaming situation that presents special problems in mapping: the city, town, or village that the PCs have never seen. The characters will not know the location of the various buildings, nor will they, realistically speaking, be able to get an overview of the city all at once. A purist approach to town mapping would thus demand that the PCs map the town as they would a dungeon, drawing in each street and building as they come across it.

I once saw a DM try to follow this approach by having his players map a circular walled town onto hex paper. Since the town was only about a mile across, in real life the

PCs could have strolled across it in twenty minutes. Mapping it took over three hours — hours of constant squabbling between the DM and the mapping player while the other players gossiped and ate potato chips. The squabbles arose over fitting the various buildings onto the map. "But if this shop is that big, it overlaps this house here. . . ."

Finally the DM took over and tried drawing the buildings on the map himself as the PC party progressed. Unfortunately, he had to look back and forth between his master map and the players' map so often that he got confused and left out an entire street. This omission, of course, threw the rest of the map totally off.

Thus we see that DMs who value playability over "realism" will do well to have a map of the town ready and simply display it to the players. Although this map will only show the exteriors of the buildings, certain buildings should be labeled. Places like a blacksmith's shop, a temple to a well-known god, or an open-air cheese market are so easy to recognize at first sight that it's ridiculous to spend game time having the PCs ask questions of NPCs — or the players ask the DM — to determine what they are. If the DM needs a justification for giving away so much information, he can rule that the PCs have spent several hours wandering around to look the town over.

See Part 2 in issue #88 of DRAGON® Magazine.



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# The forum

(From page 6)

three (fire can't exist without something to burn). The four elements do not represent things, they represent states of matter — solid, liquid, gas, and energy (earth, air, water, and fire). Thus, the elemental planes become much more exciting. On the plane of earth, for example, we would find only that which is rigid, but of forms that are incredible. Imagine the mountains of Earth without wind or rain to wear them down, imagine valleys and basins filled with the fine white powder that is solid air. Since there is no energy, nothing can move except by its own will; no form of life has blood, lungs, or brain (except for neural impulses). The list of seeming impossibilities goes on and on. In this way do the elemental

planes become a place to which one can go, for all of them are diverse and fantastic — a far cry from the abstract, unreachable planes of some, and the endless dull rock (or air, water, or fire) of others.

Scott D. Hoffrage  
Miller Place, N.Y.

\* \* \* \*

We hear a lot about overly generous DMs and Monty Haul campaigns that result in ludicrously powerful characters who have no further possibilities but a ho-hum tour of the outer planes going through pantheons like they used to go through kobold lairs.

It is my belief and contention that this imbalance is not always the fault of an unwise referee — it is built into the game! For example, a 17th level fighter needs to roll a 4 to hit armor

class 0. What happens if the fighter has a strength bonus and a magic sword? If he has managed to survive until 17th level, it's not altogether unlikely that he has acquired *gauntlets of ogre power* (which he may have gotten in the G series of modules), giving him a strength of 18/00. If he also has a +5 sword (not totally out of the question for a 17th level fighter), this makes reduces his roll to hit AC 0 to a -4! In other words, he automatically hits, twice per round, anything with AC -5 or worse.

Perhaps the fighter is accompanied by an 18th level magic-user whose favorite spell is *time stop* and a high-level cleric who can cast *resurrection* on him just in case. Maybe they also have a *cube of force* picked up in the D series modules. Maybe the trusting but unwary DM has had them through a couple of official modules, such as *Lost Temple of Tharizdun*, where their ability scores can get raised beyond 18, and there are a couple of them with primary characteristics of 20 or more. These guys will toss off huge, red dragons in much the same spirit that you or I kill cockroaches, and even nycadaemons won't give them too hard a time.

If characters like these started at first level and worked their way up legitimately over a period of (real-world) years of almost daily play, most players wouldn't take kindly to juking the campaign and starting over. If there is a solution to this other than placing an arbitrary limit on level advancement, switching to *RuneQuest* (where even rune lords aren't this powerful), or beefing up the deities, I'd like to hear about it.

David F. Godwin  
Lynn Haven, Fla.

\* \* \* \*

This is in defense of my letter printed in issue #84, which Jeffrey Carey criticized in issue #85.

I'm sure that Mr. Carey knows what he's talking about when he makes his comments about physics on the elemental planes, but he doesn't quite seem to know what I'm talking about. The point of my letter was to show why the conventional usage of the elemental planes doesn't really make sense. Mr. Carey's system is that there is an infinite expanse of substance (air, water, etc.), and that solid bodies orbit the center of the plane. In other words, each elemental plane is a huge solar system, but with fire, water, etc., separating the "planets" instead of space. I can see how this would work for air, water, and even fire, but it seems hard to use it for the plane of earth.

Even if Mr. Carey can justify this, the fact remains that next to no one uses a system like this; I've certainly never heard of it before. The way most people handle it is that there is an infinite expanse of the element (air, water, etc.) going in all directions; one direction is "down" and one direction is "up." What I meant when I said "center of gravity" is this: What force would cause there to be, all over the plane, an up and down direction? The most obvious choice is to have a center to the plane which draws all matter towards it. Whether this causes a fusion reaction or not, there would be, at any point on the plane, an infinite amount of matter pressing towards the center. This would crush anything that appeared on the plane. It's true that this wouldn't happen if one used an "orbiting" system like Mr. Carey suggests, but that's not the system I'm talking about.

In my own game world, I use "pure" elemental planes — that is, non-spatial planes of pure element which interact with the Prime Material in an abstract way only. If other DM's want to do otherwise, fine.

Edward R. Masters  
Washington, D.C.



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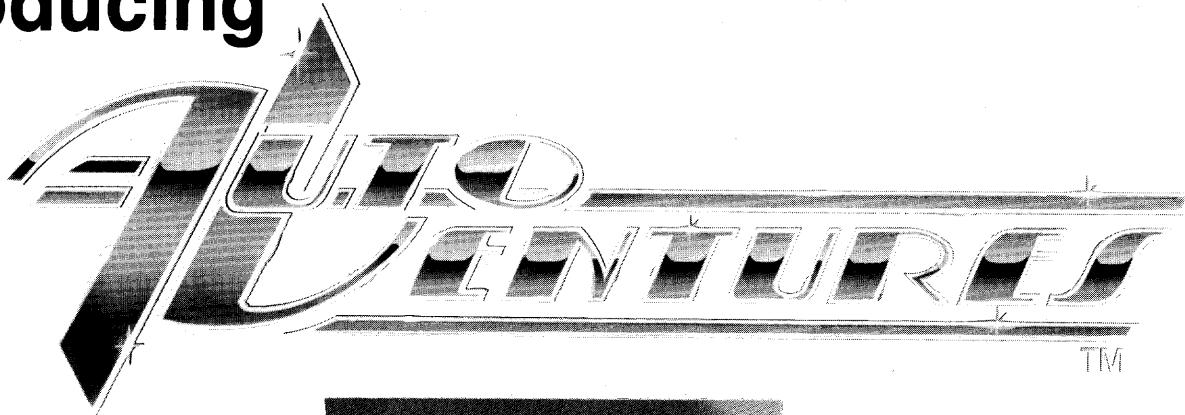
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# The ecology of the dryad

Lesson of the day: Don't catch them, they'll catch you

by Shaun Wilson

Though it was mid-autumn, the air was warm on the day of the class picnic. The sun was bright, the sky clear of all but a few clouds, and a breeze gently stirred the grass and fallen leaves. Everyone agreed that the guest of honor had outdone herself with her weather-controlling spell, and Belzime, druidess of the Eastern Wood, received their praise with a satisfied smile.

Old Malec the Sage had suggested to his students that they bring large lunches when they went out to meet the druidess and her companions at the edge of the wood. In this way he assured there would be enough to share with Belzime and her three attendants, an aged elven woman named Hibiscus and two comely young women.

"Now, isn't this better than listening to my dull speeches in some sage's dingy classroom?" Belzime asked the assembled students. A chorus of cheers came in answer.

Only Malec dissented. "My classroom has its attractions," he said after finishing off his slice of roast boar.

"At least there we don't have to resort to 'repel insect' spells to keep the ants in their place."

"A useful spell, nonetheless," said Hibiscus. "As a sorceress and a woodland dweller, I can appreciate the value of having a druid around. Are any of your students interested in druidical magic?"

"I think the boys are more interested in your two followers," Malec observed as he regarded his charges from beneath shaggy white eyebrows. Most of the boys were clustered around one of the young women,



a flame-haired beauty named Robinia. "At any rate, now that lunch is over with, we should get on with the lecture. Are you ready, my dear?"

"I think so," said Belzime. "The topic I've selected for today concerns one of our lesser-known forest allies and friends, the wood nymph, also called the dryad."

A few of the boys giggled at this announcement. "Apparently," she continued, "some of you are already familiar with the topic. What do you know about dryads?"

After a pause, one of the older students called out from the front of the class. "Dryads look like women with green hair, and they live in trees. I think some of them can talk to plants and some can teleport themselves."

"Not bad," said Belzime. "That generally sums up what most people know of dryads, though some of what you say is not quite correct. Wood nymphs are quite beautiful, as you have probably also heard, and they do have green hair. As for the rest . . . well, I'll start at the beginning.

"Plants, like animals, humans, elves, and such, have a life force that is much like a soul. This force is much fainter in plants than in animals, but some of them still have fairly powerful auras. The most powerful plant auras are found in oak trees, and sensitive humans, particularly druids, can feel the power of their life force from three paces away. This is one reason why we druids consider the oak tree sacred.

"Certain oak trees in ages past were invested with a special gift, and could form their tree-souls into animate shapes. The dryad is a permanent physical form of an oak tree's soul, and is only found around huge and old oaks of at least fifty years age. The tree must be large enough to have a powerful soul, to support the dryad who will live with it and within it. In some sense you could call the dryad a parasite, but that is not a flattering term and isn't very accurate as well."

"Being an extension of the oak tree's soul, a dryad cannot live if her tree dies or if she

is taken too far from the tree itself. Most dryads will never stray more than a thousand feet from her tree in any direction. They call this area in which they live a *terel*.

"You may be surprised to know that dryads do not need to eat, though they can consume the same foods that you and I do. They like the taste of nuts and berries, and may dig up certain edible roots as spices or foods. In the wintertime, when most plants become dormant and grow more slowly, the oak tree's life force becomes weaker. Sometimes a dryad must then eat more foods in order to sustain herself, and many store away foods that they gather during the fall for this purpose. It is rare that anyone will see a dryad in winter; like the trees, they also "sleep" for long periods of time to conserve their energy.

"Because of her ties with the oak tree's soul, a dryad gains certain special abilities. She can communicate with all forms of plant life, and especially well with the ancient treants. Since most plants are passive and unintelligent, they will obey anyone they understand. A dryad can cause plants to reach out and entangle pursuers, act as spies to report if anyone has passed by, cause vines to trip people, and so on. So close is the link between dryads and plants that most of them name themselves after trees in their woods, yielding some lovely names indeed.

"As an extension of a tree's soul, a dryad can also merge with her parent tree at will. Many people believe that dryads have built homes inside their trees, and have such furnishings as tables, chairs, beds, and chests full of gold. Nothing could be more wrong; the tiny pile of coins and gems that fascinate the wood nymphs are usually hidden in a hollow of her tree or are buried among its roots. The dryad herself lives *within* the tree, merging fully with its soul and becoming intangible."

"If I may, Belzime," interrupted Hibiscus, "it should be said that the dryad can merge with other trees as well, though she will not remain long within them. If she feels threatened she can cause herself to become fully immaterial and she will be transported instantly to the oak that is her home, merging at once with the tree's soul."

"It is possible that some of you have heard of another power dryads have," Belzime continued. "Dryads like handsome young male humans and elves, and sometimes want to keep them — the same way they keep minor treasures. The dryad can cast a spell that enhances her beauty to a man, entralling him and enabling her to command the fellow by her thoughts alone. A number of my male druidic students have described this effect to me after being rescued from well-meaning dryads who were taken by their looks." Belzime smiled. "I must be a very familiar face to the dryads of this wood. I've led quite a few rescues."

A dark-haired boy sitting near the druidess spoke up. "Is it hard to get the boys back from the nymphs?"

"Well, it is at first. The young men never want to be rescued. Dryads are especially good at hiding their fellows, and the men are entranced so they will do anything to avoid being rescued. If the dryad wants, she can even cause her fellow to merge with her oak tree's soul by her magic; then it is very hard to bring him home. The dryad who has the lad isn't much help, and will deny having ever seen him. If I come and take the boy away, she will pout and look as if she'd lost a cherished toy. She likes to have the young man cater to her whims and bring her things, and he lives for nothing but the chance to stare blissfully at his 'true love.'

"Sometimes her spell over the young man will wear off, and the dryad will sigh and give the boy something to remember her by — a few coins, a gem or two, something like that. When the fellow reaches home, he usually discovers he's been away for several years."

"Druidess," called another boy. "How do dryads make more dryads?"

Belzime looked questioningly at Malec, who shrugged and said gruffly, "They're old enough to find out. Go ahead and tell them."

"Fine. Well, some of you may have heard about races of creatures that have but one sex. Dryads are one of them, as are sylphs, nymphs, and satyrs. Dryads can have children by human and elven fathers, and if they do then their children will always be dryad girls. Dryads can also have children by satyrs, which as you know are always male. The child of a dryad and a satyr is a dryad girl half the time, a satyr boy the other half. It hardly seems likely that dryads and satyrs descended from a common ancestor, so at best we chalk this all up to the perversity of magic, or the whim of the gods.

"The female child of a dryad," Belzime continued, "will stay with her for about twelve years. If the child is a satyr, the mother will turn the boy over to his father's band for his upbringing. A girl-child will spend the first few years of her life attached to her mother's tree. When the girl comes of age, she will be taken to an oak tree of her own and will become attached to it naturally. The child then becomes a part of that tree's soul, and will live there for the rest of her days. She will rarely see her mother after that, but she will be happy and content with her life."

"Why doesn't she see her mother after that?" a young girl called.

"Oak trees may grow reasonably close together, but dryads by their nature are solitary beings. They are happy by themselves, surrounded by their woods, and they only rarely wish other company. This part of their personality may have developed because oak trees large enough to support dryads are sometimes not easily found. Each dryad's attachment to her own oak tree restricts her travel, too, so each must be satisfied with where she lives — and so she is."

"Um, my pardons," said Belzime's red-haired attendant. Belzime motioned for her to continue. "It is possible for a dryad to leave the *terel* of her oak for a brief period of time, but she will never do so intentionally. To do so brings on *glirgimer*, the wasting away of her soul, and she will wither and die within hours. It is said that powerful magics can separate a dryad from her tree without harm, but" — the girl shivered — "that is a hard thing to imagine!"

One of the more athletic boys in the class, who had listened attentively through the lecture, raised a hand. "Is there some way to get hold of a dryad and not have her charm you?"

The color went out of the red-haired girl's face. "Why?" she asked hotly. "Do you want to catch one for a pet?"

"*Robinia* . . ." murmured Belzime. "Calm down. Perhaps the young man meant something else." From the tone of the druidess's voice, however, it was obvious that she agreed with her follower's

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***Many people believe that dryads have built homes inside their trees . . . Nothing could be more wrong.***

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interpretation. She addressed the boy. "To answer your question, no. Unless one uses powerful magical defenses, the charming power of a dryad can overcome almost any man's resistance. And some dryads have kept their men hidden forever."

"If anyone were to try to lay violent hands upon a dryad, he would find her vanishing before him, on her way back in spirit form to her home tree, where she could alert any of her allies nearby. Mighty treants, remember, care about dryads greatly, and so do satyrs, elves, sprites, and pixies . . . and druids." The emphasis she put on the last word was lost on no one. "It is not a good idea to go hunting dryads for one's own sport," she concluded.

The youth chewed on a blade of grass and considered this. He seemed to lose interest in the remainder of the lecture.

Hibiscus broke the short silence that followed. "This brings up the question of what dryads like to do for fun — without having a fellow around," she said.

"Wood nymphs like their surroundings to be pretty, and themselves as well; they like beauty only for their own sake, not for what others care or think. Dryads will perfume themselves with crushed flower blossoms and style their hair with bits of flowers, leaves, and other woodland growths. Sometimes a dryad will find a way to trade some of her meager treasure for sewn garments, but dryads are just as happy without clothing as they are with it. That's another reason why young men often hunt for them — just to get a peek."

"They'll have to stand in line behind the satyrs," Robinia muttered in the background. Belzime gave her assistant a disapproving glance.

Old Malec stretched himself and stood up from the grass, dusting off his robes. "On that note, I think we should prepare ourselves for the walk home. We still have some things left to see in this forest." A chorus of groans answered him, but he was firm, and the class made ready to depart.

***Because dryads are highly intelligent, they don't try to charm morons if they can help it.***

"We appreciate your time, Madame Belzime," the sage told her after most of the students had set off for the next stop on their tour. "I think you did a nice job of convincing my boys not to comb your woods for nymphs."

"Don't worry," she said. "It's late enough in the year that they won't find them, or recognize them if they do. Remember what I said about dryads having green hair? That's only true in the spring and summer. It changes color in the fall to gold, red, or reddish brown. In wintertime it turns white."

Malec smiled. "So when the boys go looking for a green-haired girl, they'll only find girls like her." He pointed to Robinia, standing on the edge of the forest talking with Hibiscus.

"How long have you known?" Belzime asked.

"Since I heard her name. Am I correct in recalling that *Robinia pseudoacacia* is a variety of locust tree?"

## Appendix

1. A dryad's *terel* cannot be distinguished from any of the terrain surrounding her oak tree; the dryad can roughly pace it out, however, because she becomes increasingly uneasy as she passes from the 33" distance to the 36" radius edge.

2. If a dryad is forcibly taken beyond 36" from her oak, she will rapidly (within five rounds) exhibit symptoms of starvation, depression, and exhaustion, and will die in 6-36 hours if nothing is done. A *heal* spell will negate all the symptoms, but the effect of the spell wears off in four hours, and *glrigimer* sets in again if the dryad is still outside her *terel*. An *exorcism* spell will separate the dryad from the tree's "soul"; in this event, the dryad must find another suitable oak tree within seven days, or the *glrigimer* symptoms begin. A dryad's magic resistance should be checked whenever these or other spells are cast upon her.

3. An average dryad lives for as long as her oak tree does. Damage suffered by the



tree will affect the dryad adversely, perhaps putting her into a temporary coma even if the tree survives the shock. If her tree dies, the dryad will die as well from *glrigimer* unless she is *exorcised* and transported to a new tree.

4. For spell effects, assume a dryad can use the following powers at will: *speak with plants*, *plant door*, *commune with nature*, *detect snares and pits*, *locate plants*, *locate animals*, *entangle*, and *trip* (at the 9th level of druidic ability), and *dimension door* (to anywhere within her *terel*). Some dryads (10%) have the power to use *pass plant* at will instead of the *dimension door* ability, though again it will only function within a dryad's own *terel*.

5. There is a 2% chance of encountering a dryad with a female child under twelve years of age. The child will have reduced statistics for an adult, as determined by the DM. For instance, a young dryad could have 1-4 HP, fight as a creature with less than 1 - 1 HD, and would have none of her

"adult" powers except the *speak with plants* ability, performed at 1 1st-level effectiveness. When the child reaches 12 years of age, her mother helps her find a suitable tree, and she takes up residence as a full-fledged dryad with 2 hit dice and all of a dryad's magical abilities. However, it takes time to master those abilities: the effectiveness of a young dryad's magic goes up one level every year (2nd level at age 13, 3rd level at age 14, etc.) until she attains 9th-level effectiveness at age 20.

6. For game purposes, a dryad's *charm* power works much like a powerful version of the druid spell *charm person or mammal*. An intended victim is allowed a saving throw (at -3, as per the Monster Manual) upon first encountering the *charm* power. (Magic resistance, if applicable, is checked before the saving throw.) A failure to save indicates that the *charm* has taken effect; then, on a roll of 1-3 on a d6, the *charm* is permanent. If the *charm* is not permanent, it will last for an indefinite period of time. The victim is allowed subsequent saving throws — each at -3 — at intervals that depend on the victim's intelligence. (See the chart on p. 55 of the Players Handbook.) However, because of the power of the dryad's *charm*, read the saving-throw chart intervals as years, months, and weeks instead of months, weeks, and days. For instance, a victim with 6 intelligence is allowed a new saving throw every two years; one with 18 intelligence can try to break the *charm* once every two weeks.

From this, it is easy to see why dryads prefer to enchant young (low- to mid-level) men who aren't overly intelligent — the sort who'll be easy to *charm* and easy to keep that way. Elves and half-elves, with their innate resistance to *charm* magic, are rarely the object of a dryad's "affections." She will try to *charm* a character with elven blood only if her life depends on it or if she runs across an elf or half-elf with 18 charisma. Because dryads are highly intelligent, they don't try to *charm* morons if they can help it; a servant of low intelligence would become boring before the influence of the *charm* wore off. But they can't resist trying to *charm* characters with high charisma, whether they're morons or geniuses. If threatened with harm or removal from her *terel*, a dryad will try to *charm* anyone she can.

A dryad can use her *charm* ability three times each day if necessary. She rarely has occasion to use them up since large groups of men don't often travel through her *terel*. Even when her *charm* powers are depleted, she can use her *plant door* and *dimension door* abilities to get home.

7. When a dryad is inside her tree, she can be hurt by any attack form that damages the tree (chopping or burning). But note again that a dryad has quite a few friends in the forest. Anyone who tries to harm her or her tree will have to get in line behind the satyrs, treants, wood elves, pixies, sprites, and druids — and deal with all of them first.

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# SF/gaming convention calendar

## OCTACON I, July 13-15

The Staff of Giza will be coordinating this convention; all proceeds will be donated to the Augustana Speech and Hearing Center. Donations at the door will be \$5 (which includes one free game). For further information about this event, contact: Staff of Giza, P.O. Box 772, Rock Island IL 61204, or call (309)788-8450.

## BANGOR AREA WARGAMERS CONVENTION, July 21-22

This eighth annual convention will be staged at the Orono Recreation Center in Orono, Maine. Arrangements have been made for participants to stay over the night of July 21 in the Recreation Hall, so anyone planning to attend should bring proper sleeping gear. Registration for the weekend is \$5 at the door; no preregistration is available. For more details, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Edward F. Stevens, Jr., 32 Masonic Street, Rockland ME 04841, or telephone (207)596-0338.

## SUMMERCON 84, July 27-29

To be staged at the MIT Student Center, Cambridge, Mass., this convention will feature FRP games, board games, and miniatures. Door and event prizes will be awarded. For information, contact: SummerCon 84, 122 Bowdoin St., Apt. 77, Boston MA 02108.

## ATLANTA FANTASY FAIR 10, Aug. 3-5

This event will be held at the Omni Hotel and World Congress Center. Guests include Larry Niven, Chris Claremont, Richard Pini, Robert Bloch, and many more. Activities include tournaments, a costume contest, model and sculpture competitions, an amateur film festival, an art show, a dealers' room, and twenty fantasy films. Pendragon Galleries will have a special art exhibition with paintings by all top fantasy artists, including Boris Vallejo, Michael Whelan, and Rowena Morrill. Registration fees are \$25 at the door. For information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Atlanta Fantasy Fair, P.O. Box 566, Marietta GA 30061, or call (404)425-8095.

## MYSTICON 3, August 3-5

To be held at the Holiday Inn-Tanglewood in Roanoke, Va., this convention will include an art show, role-playing games, video movies, and a masquerade. Guests of honor will be Karl Wagner, Somtow Sucharitkul, Paul Dellinger, and Rudy Rucker. Registration fees are \$15 at the door; tickets for the luncheon buffet banquet are \$12 each. Contact: Mysticon 3, P.O. Box 1367, Salem VA 24153.

## OMACON 4, August 3-5

Sponsored by the Omaha Beach Gaming Club, this convention will be staged at the Holiday Inn-Old Mill in Omaha, Neb.

Science-fiction guests of honor include Poul Anderson, Karen Anderson, and Melinda Murdock; Dan Charleston will be toastmaster. Featured events are a NASA display, a buffet banquet, fantasy role-playing games, a dealers' room, an art show, and panel discussions and demonstrations. Registration is \$13 until August 1, and \$15 at the door. Banquet tickets cost \$10 in advance. For details concerning this event, contact: Omacon 4, 2518 So. 167th St., Omaha NE 68130.

## TIMECON '84, Aug. 3-5

This convention will be held at the San Jose Convention Center in San Jose, Cal. Events include board games, video games, science-fiction and fantasy role-playing adventures, Doctor Who games, an art show, a costume contest, and a dance. John Pertwee, James P. Hogan, Eric L. Hoffman, and Dave Smeds will be among the guests of honor. For further information, contact: Timecon '84, 1025 Jefferson St., Santa Clara CA 95051.

## COLONIAL CITY GAMEFEST, Aug. 10-12

Sponsored by the Mt. Vernon Gamers Association, this gaming convention will be staged at the Mt. Vernon High School in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Tournaments, awards, an art show, and a miniatures contest will be some of the featured events. Contact: Colonial City Gamefest, 1003½ East Gambier St., Mt. Vernon OH 43050.

## ARCANACON II, Aug. 23-26

To be staged at the University High School in Parkville, Melbourne, Australia, this convention will include board games and role-playing games and tournaments. For further information, contact: Arcanacon, C/- 105 Cardigan Street, Carlton 3053, Australia.

## EARTHCON IV, Sept. 7-9

This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Cleveland, Ohio. Events will include workshops, panels on game design and scenario writing, tournaments, board games, role-playing-games, a masquerade, "filksinging," an art show, a *Star Trek* festival, and more. Poul Anderson, Steve Jackson, and Tom Moldvay will be among the guests of honor. Contact: Earthcon IV, P.O. Box 5641, Cleveland OH 44101.

## TENTH ANNUAL COUNCIL OF NATIONS, Oct. 5-8

This special anniversary convention will include open fantasy role-playing gaming, mini-battles, a mini-painting contest, game instruction, a costume contest, an auction, and numerous tournaments. For details, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to I. M. Lord, SWA 10th Council, 1639 Eastern Parkway, Schenectady NY 12309.

## WINGAMES V, Oct. 5-7

This convention centers around a large AD&D® tournament, with prizes and trophies for most events. Admission is free at the door, though a small charge (50¢ to \$3) exists per event entered. Contact: University of Manitoba Gaming Club, Box 80, University Center, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3T 2N2.

## LIN-CON VI, Oct. 12-14

To be held at the Gateway Auditorium at 66th and O Streets in Lincoln, Neb., this convention will feature board games, miniatures events, and role-playing tournaments. For additional details, contact: Merl Hayes, c/o Hobby Town, 134 North 13th St., Lincoln NE 68508, or call (402)476-3829.

## CONSTELLATION III, Oct. 19-21

This convention will be staged at the Sheraton Inn located in Huntsville, Ala. Master of ceremonies will be Frank Kelly Freas, and guests of honor will include Gordon R. Dickson, Maurine Dorris, and Tim Bolger. Featured events are readings, panels, autograph sessions, a masquerade, hearts and gaming tournaments, an art show, and an auction. Registration fees for the convention are \$13 until September 15, and \$16 at the door. For additional information about this event, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Con-Stellation III, P.O. Box 4857, Huntsville AL 35815.

## CRUSADER CON IV, Oct. 19-21

This event will be held at the Metropolitan State College campus in Denver, Colo. Events will include *Diplomacy*®, *Kingmaker*™, AD&D®, *Traveller*®, *Squad Leader*™, *Car Wars*™, and *Star Fleet Battles*™ tournaments. Registration is \$8 until October 1, and \$10 thereafter. For more details, contact: The Auraria Gamer's Club, P.O. Box 13395, Denver CO 80201-3395.

## ICON IX, Oct. 26-28

This annual science-fiction convention will be staged at the Abbey Inn in Iowa City, Iowa. Guests of Honor will be Dean Ing and Wilson Tucker. Registration fees are \$10 until October 1, and \$15 thereafter. Art show and huckster inquiries are welcome. For further information about the convention, contact: Icon IX, P.O. Box 525, Iowa City IA 52244-0525.

## R-CON 1, Nov. 2-4

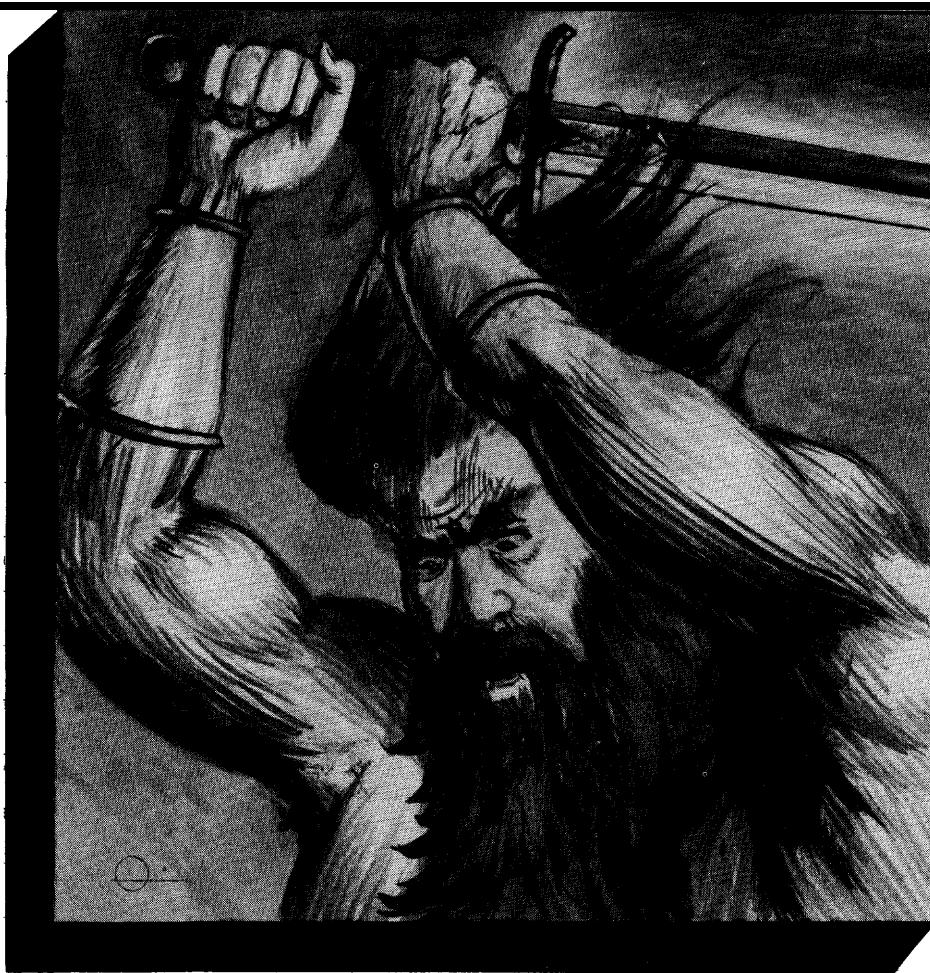
This gaming convention will be held at the Genesee Plaza Holiday Inn in Rochester, NY. Guests include David Gerrold and Forrest J. Ackerman. Featured will be role-playing and board games, panels, films, an art show, and a masquerade. Registration fees are \$10 until September 1, and \$12 at the door. Contact: R-Con 1, P.O. Box 1701, Rochester NY 14603.

# Gods of the Suel pantheon

## Kord the Brawler and Phaulkon, his father

by Lenard Lakofka

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### KORD

#### The Brawler

##### Greater God

ARMOR CLASS: -7

MOVE: 24"

HIT POINTS: 330

NUMBER OF ATTACKS: 4

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-24 + 14

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Can break any item he can grasp except for a few artifacts*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better to be hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

SIZE: L (9' tall)

ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic good*

WORSHIPERS' ALIGNMENT: *Fighters, berserkers, barbarians of all alignments*

SYMBOL: *White gauntlets, blue boots, and a red girdle*

PLANE: *Gladsheim*

CLERIC/DRUID: 3rd level cleric

FIGHTER: 25th level fighter

M-U/ILLUSIONIST: 3rd level magic-user  
THIEF/ASSASSIN: *Climb walls as 10th level thief*

MONK/BARD: *Fall as 10th level monk*

PSIONIC ABILITY: VI

S: 25 (+7, +14) I: 13 W: 13 D: 21

C: 22 CH: 13 (24 as titan; see below)

Kord is a colossus of muscle with a long red beard and red hair. He wears a simple girdle of dragon hide (will give *frost giant strength*), boots of blue dragon hide (*boots of speed*), and gauntlets of white dragon hide (*gauntlets of ogre power*); he is not diminished by the loss of these items, however. He will sometimes lend them to other fighters during battle. The saving throw of these items vs. all attack forms is 2.

Kord bears the sword *Kelmar*, an electrified +5 weapon that will dance upon Kord's command at its full +5 for six melee rounds, striking as a 25th level fighter (as if Kord were holding it). The sword deals out 3-24 points of damage when it scores a hit. When

Kord wields it, *Kelmar* is +7 to hit and +14 to damage because of Kord's great strength.

*Kelmar* has an ego of 18 and an intelligence of 18, and is aligned chaotic good; beings other than Kord can use the sword. It will *dance* within 60 feet of the wielder just as any *dancing sword*. When it dances, it strikes as many times per round as its present wielder would. *Kelmar* can *detect enemies* within 60 feet of Kord, and will use *telepathy* to convey this information, whether it is dancing or not.

*Kelmar*'s special purpose is to slay dragons. It acts as a *vorpal weapon* on a roll of natural 20 against dragons and dragon-types (including chimeras, dragon turtles, dragonnes, and wyverns) — even against Tiamat. However, the sword is incapable of hitting Bahamut.

If *Kelmar* comes within 60 feet of a dragon or dragon-type, it will insist on moving closer to attack the monster. If its wielder does not advance toward the monster, *Kelmar* will leap out of the wielder's

hands or scabbard and **dance** into combat. Only a character with a strength of 22 or greater can hold onto Kelmar when it is trying to break free. If the sword is carried more than 60 feet away from the dragon, it will return to its normal "ready" state.

In addition to Kelmar, Kord also bears an ordinary two-handed **sword** +3 that he can use with one hand while Kelmar is dancing.

Once per day Kord can *polymorph* himself into a titan with a charisma of 24, maintaining his full strength. He will use the full **awe power** of his charisma in this form to aid friendly troops and to undermine the morale of hostiles.

Kord is the son of the lesser gods Phaulkon and Syrul. He has taken little from either of his parents, instead becoming greater than either of them — only Lendor can control Kord if he goes berserk.

Kord's **blood rage** occurs whenever he takes half his hit points or more in damage. In this state, he will try to kill anything — friend and foe alike — that stood within 60 feet of him when the **blood rage** began. He becomes even stronger, +8 to hit and +17 to damage, when he is enraged. Because of this **rage**, Kord is widely worshipped in the barbarian communities, even though Kord's alignment is oriented toward good.

Kord is quite the fool for a pretty face. He favors elven and human women, but has also consorted with other humanoids and even giants. The world is full of his sons and daughters, but few, if any, of them can claim demigod status (less than 1%). Any figures who can make that claim must have scores of 18 to 20 in two of these three ability areas: strength, constitution, and dexterity.

To determine whether an offspring of Kord is entitled to demigod status, roll 2d6+6 for each of the character's ability scores. Two of the results must be 18 (rolls of 12, modified), and the numbers must be assigned so that the character has scores of 18 in two of the three physical abilities: strength, constitution, and dexterity. If this criterion is met, roll d4 for each ability score of 18: a result of 1 or 2 means no adjustment, a result of 3 raises that ability score to 19, and a result of 4 raises it to 20.

Only those characters who pass all these tests and end up with two scores of 19 or higher among strength, constitution, and dexterity can dare to claim their birthright and openly profess Kord as their father. Kord will not deny such a claim; instead, on the child's 17th birthday Kord will come forth to give the young warrior a great task based almost entirely on fighting ability. Those who pass this test will acquire limited special powers (see the lists below).

Although passing this final test does qualify the character (in Kord's eyes) to call himself or herself a demigod, the overriding power of Lendor keeps Kord's offspring from dominating the Prime Material plane. Each "demigod" character gains from 2-4 special powers; roll d8 once for each of the following lists.

List #1 : 1. Save vs. poison is 3

2. Save vs. death is 4
3. Save vs. all forms of **fear** is 3
4. Immune to *quest* and *geas* spells
5. *Mask alignment* at will
6. Immune to normal missiles
7. Immune to *sleep*, *hold*, and *slow*
8. Roll twice, ignoring 8s and duplicates

List #2: 1. *Heal* self once/week

2. *Jump* or *levitate* at will
3. *Enlarge* self at will, as 10th level M-U
4. *Climb walls* as 7th level thief
5. No non-proficiency penalties applied
6. Can cast *silence* on self at will
7. *Blood rage*: Will go berserk (+2 to strength) if damaged 50% or more in combat, fighting until slain or until everything within 60 feet is killed
8. Roll twice, ignoring 8s and duplicates

Kord's children may never be lawful, nor may they be paladins, illusionists, monks, or druids. Any of his children who do not enter his clergy and who reject the fighting profession (by not becoming a fighter or ranger) and any of his offspring who display cowardice will be disowned, which might mean (30% chance) that Kord himself will come to the Prime Material plane to slay the offending character.

The clergy of Kord dress in bright red, white, and blue vestments, but none may duplicate the exact pattern that Kord wears on his girdle, gauntlets, and boots. Only his sons and daughters who join the clergy may dare to don dragon-hide armor as Kord does. Kord's clergy are either chaotic neutral (3 in 6), chaotic good (2 in 6), or chaotic evil (1 in 6).

Kord's clergy must show bravery and leadership in battle at all times. To foster their fulfillment of this role, Kord strengthens his clergy with a bonus on saving throws involving **fear** and special spells attainable at higher levels.

At levels 1-3, clerics of Kord can only wear white. They get a +1 bonus on saves vs. **fear** attacks.

At level 4, they can wear white and blue robes, the save bonus is +2, and they receive access to the **protection from lawful** spell.

At level 7, clerics can wear red, white, and blue garments. They get a +3 save bonus vs. **fear** and the new spell **detect lawful**.

At level 10, Kord's clerics wear a red girdle with blue and white trim, they get a +4 bonus to saves vs. **fear**, and the ability to cast *enlarge* (on self).

At level 16 and above, clerics wear white boots, a red girdle, and blue trim. Their save bonus is +5, and they can cast **strength** (on self).

Saving throws vs. **fear** apply to all forms of fear, including the auras of demons and devils, fright caused by undead, the effects

of very high or very low charisma, and so forth.

Bonus spells are granted cumulatively, so that a 7th level cleric of Kord would have access to both **protection from lawful** and **detect lawful**. These bonus spells are simply other choices, in addition to normal cleric spells, and do not increase the spell-carrying or spell-casting capacity of the cleric. They are prayed for the same way that regular cleric spells are received, counting **protection from lawful** and **detect lawful** as 1st level spells and **enlarge** and **strength** as 2nd level spells. All the bonus spells are cast at the level of experience of the cleric.

**Protection from lawful** works like **protection from evil**, except that it serves as proof against those of lawful alignment (while keeping out chaotic as well). The material component is holy water (sprinkled in a circle) or holy incense (burned in the air).

**Detect lawful** works like **detect evil**, except that it discovers emanations from those of lawful alignment.

**Enlarge** and **strength** work the same as the 1st level magic-user spells of the same names.

Kord is worshipped more than any other Suel deity. Thriving churches dedicated to him can be found in the Barbarian States, northern Ulek, Almor, the Great Kingdom, Hepmonaland, and on Lendore Isle. Small isolated churches may be found among peasants over the entire route of the Suloise migration (see the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy Setting).

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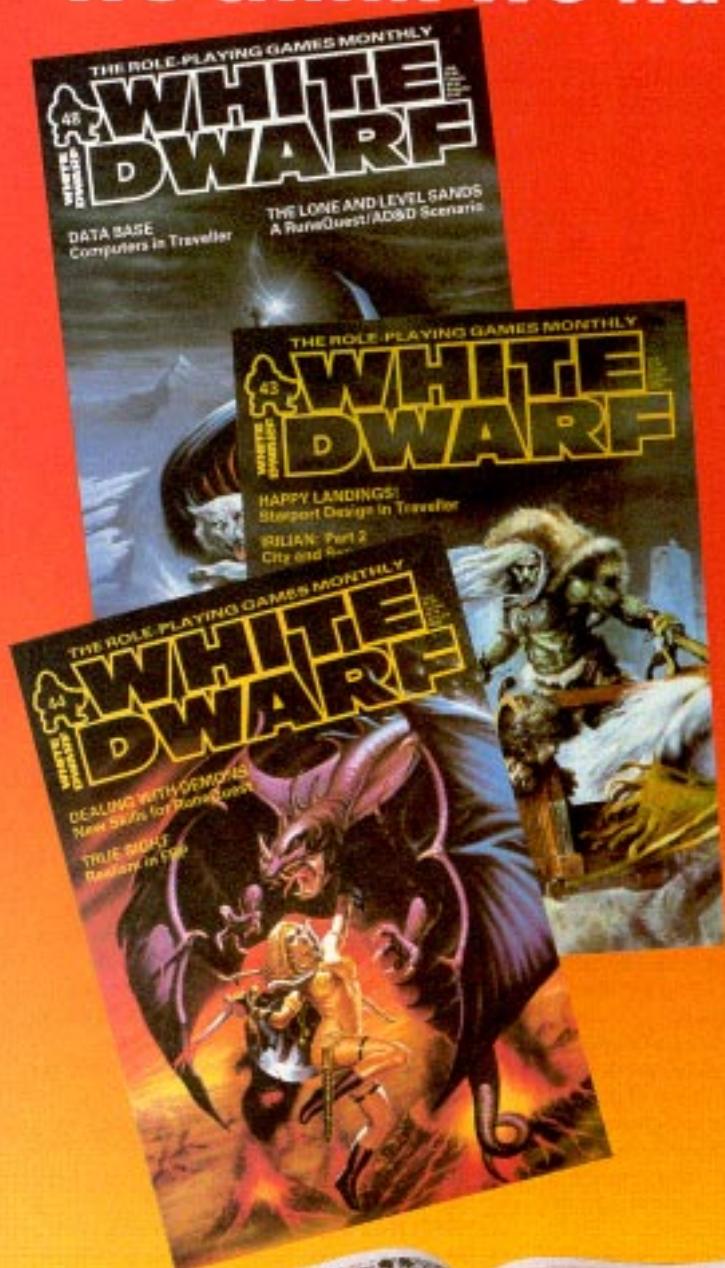
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Edited by  
Ian Livingstone  
co-author of  
The Warlock  
of Firetop Mountain

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## PHAULKON

### God of the Open Air

#### Lesser God

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 12"/48"

HIT POINTS: 265

NUMBER OF ATTACKS: 5 (3)

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12 +5 from arrow;  
2-11 + 11 from dagger

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Spells

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to attacks  
from feathered creatures

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65% (90% while  
flying or on Elemental Plane of Air)

SIZE: M (6'8" tall)

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic good

WORSHIPERS' ALIGNMENT: Good

SYMBOL: An outline of a man with large  
eagle wings

PLANE: Elemental Plane of Air

CLERIC/DRUID: 5th level cleric/7th level  
druid

FIGHTER: 22nd level ranger

M-U/ILLUSIONIST: Special (see below)

THIEF/ASSASSIN: 7th level thief

MONK/BARD: 22nd level bard

PSIONIC ABILITY: VI

S: 24 (+5, +11) I: 20 W: 19

D: 23 C: 19 CH: 19

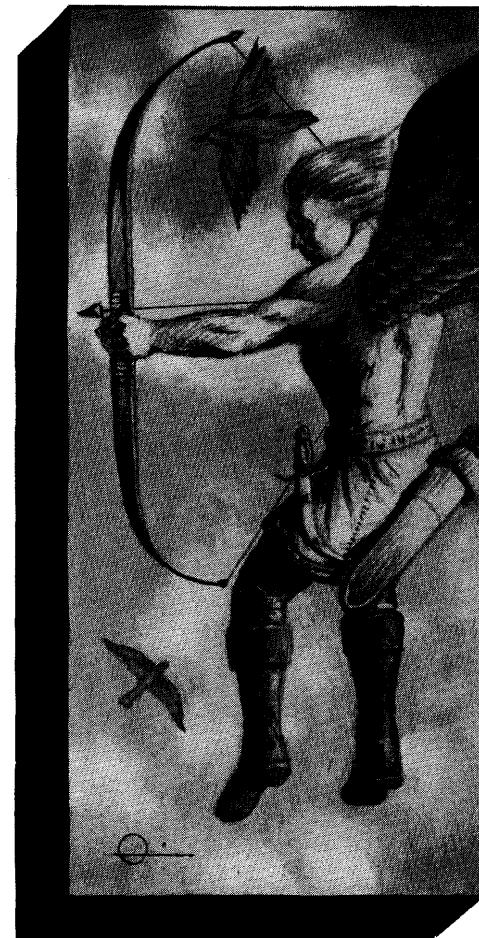
Phaulkon appears as a powerful, usually bare-chested man. He is clean shaven, and his hair is short and always tousled. He wears a simple girdle that gives him the power of flight with the speed and maneuverability of a djinni.

Phaulkon fights with a longbow and dagger only. He can fire up to five arrows in a round. His bow is +5 to hit with a maximum range of 600 yards. Arrows fired from the bow do not suffer from range reductions and are +2 for the purpose of magical "to hit" considerations. Each of his arrows will do 2-12 points of damage +5 for the magical enchantment. Once an arrow is used in combat, whether it hits or misses, it becomes an ordinary arrow again. Phaulkon can fire arrows with no penalty while flying.

His dagger is +3 to hit and to damage because of magic, dealing out 2-11 points of damage +3 for magic and +11 more for Phaulkon's strength. He can attack three times per round with the dagger. Both his bow and dagger can be used by no one but Phaulkon himself; they are -3 cursed weapons in the hands of anyone else.

Phaulkon can summon a djinni once per day, a noble djinni once per week, and a 20 HD air elemental once per month. Each summoned being will obey him to the death. If giant eagles or rocs are within 100 miles of him, he can summon all of them to him, but they must come at their normal flying speed.

Phaulkon is immune to any attack from a feathered creature, including such beasts as griffons, cockatrices, and pegasi. His magic resistance is 90% while he is in the air. Even without his *girdle of flight*, he can become airborne by using his innate fly



ability (as the spell, with no limit on duration). Phaulkon can speak with any bird or flying creature that uses wings for flight, including demons and devils.

By his touch, he can make any bow or arrow +1 to hit and to damage permanently (subject to possible destruction of the item). He will give this gift only to fighters of good alignment who perform some important task for him, enchanting either a single bow or one arrow for each level of the fighter/paladin/ranger being benefitted.

Phaulkon is a relatively active traveler, and enjoys the company of men and elves. He can *shape change* into any normal or giant bird at will, as well as into the form of an elf or sprite.

Phaulkon is second only to Kord in fighting ability among the deities of the Suel pantheon. As such, he has the power to raise a character's strength, dexterity, or constitution score by one full point (or any of those abilities to 15, if it is not already that high) for a period of one day. The maximum strength, dexterity, or constitution score he will bestow in this way is 19.

Phaulkon is highly resistant to the effects of artifacts and relics, and can temporarily negate the major power(s) of such a device for 6-36 hours (power usable once per month). He cannot destroy an artifact in any case, but is 75% likely to know a great deal about any artifact he sees — aside from how to destroy it.

Phaulkon's clergy often wear headdresses of feathers in services and rituals, one feather per level of the cleric. His clerics always wear at least one feather at all times.

As special benefits for their service, Phaulkon grants his clerics these powers as they progress in levels: At 5th level his clerics can *speak with birds* on an unlimited basis (this does not include giant birds of any type). At 8th level they can *fly* once per day as an 8th level magic-user. At 11th level they can *control winds* once per day as an 11th level druid. At 16th level they can summon an 8 HD air elemental (that will be totally friendly) once per week.

In addition to feathers, his clergy always wear white in ceremonies. During travel and everyday labors, they wear various shades of blue.

Phaulkon is worshiped as a major deity on Lendore Isle as well as in Keoland, Ulek, the Yeomanry, and Celene. It is very doubtful if his temples appear in the barbarian north or in Hepmonaland.

*Look for Syrul, Goddess of False Promises and Deceit; Fortubo, God of Stone, Metals and Mountains; and Wee Jas, Goddess of Magic and Death, as detailed by Leonard Lakofka, in issue #88 of DRAGON® Magazine.*

## STANDARD DIVINE ABILITIES

All deities have the following abilities and powers in common, each usable at will:

<i>Astral &amp; ethereal travel</i>	<i>Know alignment</i>
<i>Comprehend languages</i>	<i>Levitate</i>
<i>Continual darkness</i>	<i>Mirror image</i>
<i>Continual light</i>	<i>Polymorph self</i>
<i>Cure (blindness, deafness, disease, feeblemind, insanity)</i>	<i>Read languages &amp; magic</i>
<i>Detect (charm, evil/good, illusion, invisibility, lie, magic, traps)</i>	<i>Teleport (no error)</i>
<i>Geas</i>	<i>Tongues</i>
<i>Infravision &amp; ultravision</i>	

In addition, each group of deities has other particular powers and abilities, as described below. A number in parentheses after a listing indicates the times per day the power can be used; lack of a number means the power is usable as often as the deity desires.

### Greater Gods:

<i>Anti-magic shell (2)</i>	<i>Holy/unholy word (3)</i>
<i>Command, 4 rd. effect (2)</i>	<i>Improved invisibility</i>
<i>Control environment<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Improved phantasmal force</i>
<i>Cure critical wounds (3)</i>	<i>Polymorph any object (1)</i>
<i>Death spell (2)</i>	<i>Polymorph others (3)</i>
<i>Dispel (evil/good, illusion, magic (8 each)</i>	<i>Protection from evil/good, +3, 30' radius</i>
<i>Fly</i>	<i>Quest (2)</i>
<i>Gate (3)</i>	<i>Remove curse</i>
<i>Globe of invulnerability (1)</i>	<i>Remove fear</i>
<i>Heal (3)</i>	<i>Regenerate</i>

<i>Restoration (3)</i>
<i>Resurrection</i>
<i>Shapechange (3)</i>
<i>Summon<sup>2</sup></i>
<i>Symbol (3)</i>
<i>Time stop (1)</i>
<i>Trap the soul</i>
<i>True seeing (5)</i>
<i>Vision (1)</i>
<i>Wish</i>

### Lesser Gods:

<i>Anti-magic shell (2)</i>	<i>Holy/unholy word (2)</i>
<i>Command, 3 rd. effect (1)</i>	<i>Improved invisibility</i>
<i>Control temperature, 10' r.</i>	<i>Improved phantasmal force</i>
<i>Cure serious wounds (3)</i>	<i>Minor globe of invulnerability (1)</i>
<i>Death spell (1)</i>	<i>Polymorph others (2)</i>
<i>Dispel (evil/good, illusion, magic) (4 each)</i>	<i>Protection from evil/good, +2, 20' radius</i>
<i>Gate (2)</i>	<i>Quest (1)</i>
<i>Heal (2)</i>	

<i>Remove curse</i>
<i>Remove fear</i>
<i>Restoration</i>
<i>Summon<sup>3</sup></i>
<i>Symbol (2)</i>
<i>Trap the soul</i>
<i>True seeing (3)</i>
<i>Wish (1)</i>

### Demigods:

<i>Anti-magic shell (1)</i>	<i>Heal</i>
<i>Command, 2 rd. effect (1)</i>	<i>Holy/unholy word (1)</i>
<i>Cure light wounds (3)</i>	<i>Invisibility</i>
<i>Dispel (evil/good, illusion, magic) (2 each)</i>	<i>Limited wish (1)</i>
<i>Finger of death</i>	<i>Phantasmal force</i>
<i>Gate (1)</i>	<i>Protection from evil/good, 10' radius</i>

<i>Raise dead (3)</i>
<i>Remove curse (3)</i>
<i>Remove fear</i>
<i>Summon<sup>4</sup></i>
<i>Symbol (1)</i>
<i>True seeing (2)</i>
<i>Wall of force</i>

### Notes:

1 — *Control environment* subsumes both *control temperature* and *control weather*. It actually allows the greater god to adjust the surroundings of his or her immediate environment to suit his or her desire, even if the change is radical. The area of control extends from a 12" radius to a 72" radius depending on how radical the change required is.

2 — A greater god can *summon* from one to six creatures of the same alignment as the god, and all of the same type, with the total hit dice of the creatures so summoned not to exceed 40.

3 — The *summon* power of a lesser god can bring from one to three creatures of the same alignment as the lesser deity. Each must be of the same sort as the others summoned. No more than 25 total hit dice of creatures can be so called.

4 — For demigods, the *summon* power is limited to one or two creatures of not more than 20 total hit dice. Again, creatures must be of the same alignment and (if more than one is summoned) of the same type.

### Clerics' experience penalties

In many cases, clerics who worship a deity of the Suel pantheon are rewarded with certain special powers. As compensation for this privilege, a cleric must "pay" experience points, in the form of a penalty that forces the character to earn more points to advance in level than are required for a normal cleric. The recommended way to administer this penalty is to deduct the required percentage of experience points whenever experience points are awarded. For instance, a cleric who must pay a 10% penalty throughout his level progression will have 10% of his earned experience continuously deducted prior to the awarding of experience (usually at the end of an adventure). A cleric who must pay a penalty to advance to one particular level will do so after every adventure during the time he is rising through the next lower level.

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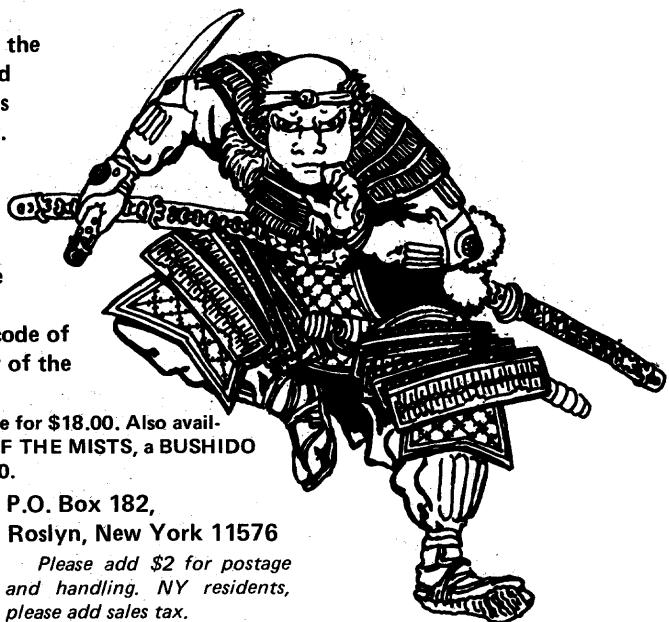
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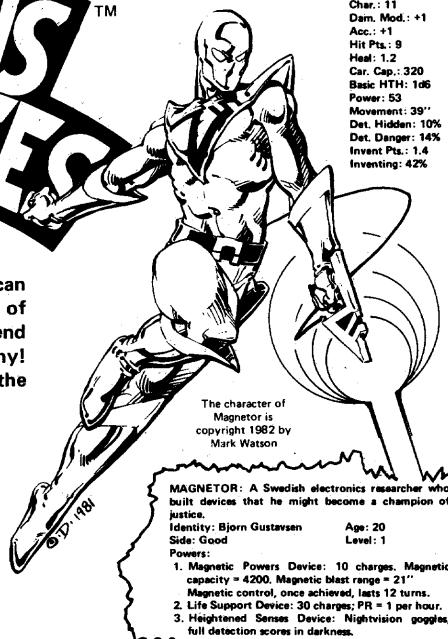
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Text and artwork by Jack Crane

*The following text was extracted and rewritten from the secret diary of Hortus the Floriculturist by an unidentified associate and confidant.*

**H**ortus shut the door softly behind him. He rested his frame against the door and closed his eyes to drink in the earthy scents, his lips curling in a satisfied smile. His eyes, eyes that seemed to burn with the fire of unquenchable wisdom and power, opened slowly to feast upon the scene before him.

Within the greenhouse he was the creator. He held the power of life and death — and more — he held their secrets. They were his brides in the act of creation, companions in the womb, awaiting the loving manipulation of this architect extraordinaire.

Around him lay his progeny, the products of his love, wisdom, and power. Hortus knelt on one knee in supplication to his children, and lovingly caressed the bed in which they were nurtured . . . the bed they shared with their mother. Long had he toiled in that bed, his sweat mingling with their mother, the earth, mother of all living things.

Slowly, relentlessly, he had unlocked and unraveled the secrets of the virgin territory. Patience, discipline, perseverance, and most of all knowledge had prevailed. The rewards were greater than his most outlandish fantasies, than his most outrageous intellectual expectations.

He had tapped The Source. He owned The Source. He was the master; The Source moved and flowed to his dictate. The fruit of his genius swayed and chattered about him. He had shaped the very essence of their beings to suit his needs and whims. Their forms were of his will, their colors of his desire. He had ruthlessly woven the fabrics of life into patterns of his choosing. The warp and woof were wed in organic tapestries to

please his eyes.

He had dedicated a lifetime to perfecting the design of his children. And his lifespan was not that of an ordinary mortal; it was not measured in years or decades but measured in eons. But alas, he was not immortal. Fall had long since passed through his elan vital. The chill eternal winter was settling within his bones like the first snowfall of an ice age. The light blazed but the flame flickered.

There would be no more springs in his life. Or would there?

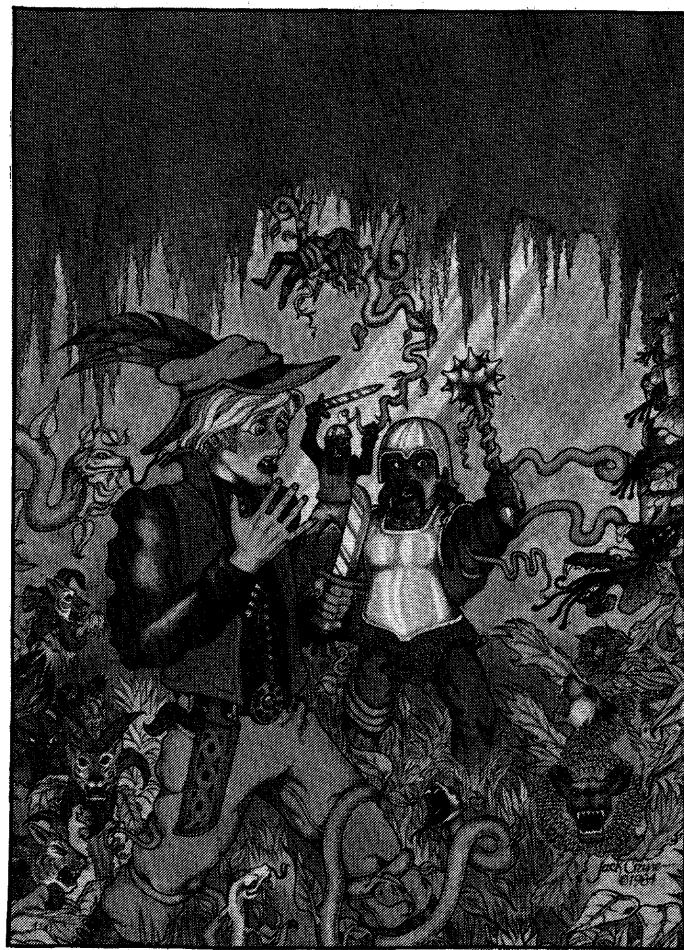
Something precipitous awaited Death's arrival. If Hortus had his way, which was inevitable, Death would depart grasping sand. He could not, he would not, resign himself to the finality of the Stygian crossing. Soon his mortal shell would crumble like the leaves beneath his window, but the esoteric essence, his being, would continue . . . within his creations. . . .

At the instant of death, his physical brain would be removed from his skull like a seed from its pod and carefully fed, along with some magic of alchemy, to a selected few of his spawn. His mind, his thoughts, his life would cohabit their magical hybridized forms. His life form would continue for eternity in a symbiotic marriage with these plants through this synthesis of science and metaphysics.

His protégés, those few rare beings with whom he had shared his trust and his secrets, would each take one of the twelve plants that he had entrusted with his soul. Those trustees would protect and nurture these charmed flora/fauna, and in return would reap any and all of Hortus's wisdom at their beckoning. Immortality would be his . . . at a very high cost.

**S**ometime during the second millennium of the Age of Magic and Enlightenment,

Hortus the Floriculturist vanished from the planet. No remains were ever found. Legend imparts that his mortal body was secretly cremated, his bones crushed and ground to a fine powder, and the ashes and bone-meal offered as fertilizer to his beloved "children." Many of these strange and often frightening manifestations may be found in isolated pockets of forest,



field, or jungle. Some have been observed to be in the care of certain reclusive magicians and clerics. No trace has ever been found of Hortus's twelve apostolic custodians. Rumors persist.

On the following pages is a brief botanical encyclopedia of the bizarre but fascinating flora/fauna engineered by the genius of Hortus the Floriculturist.

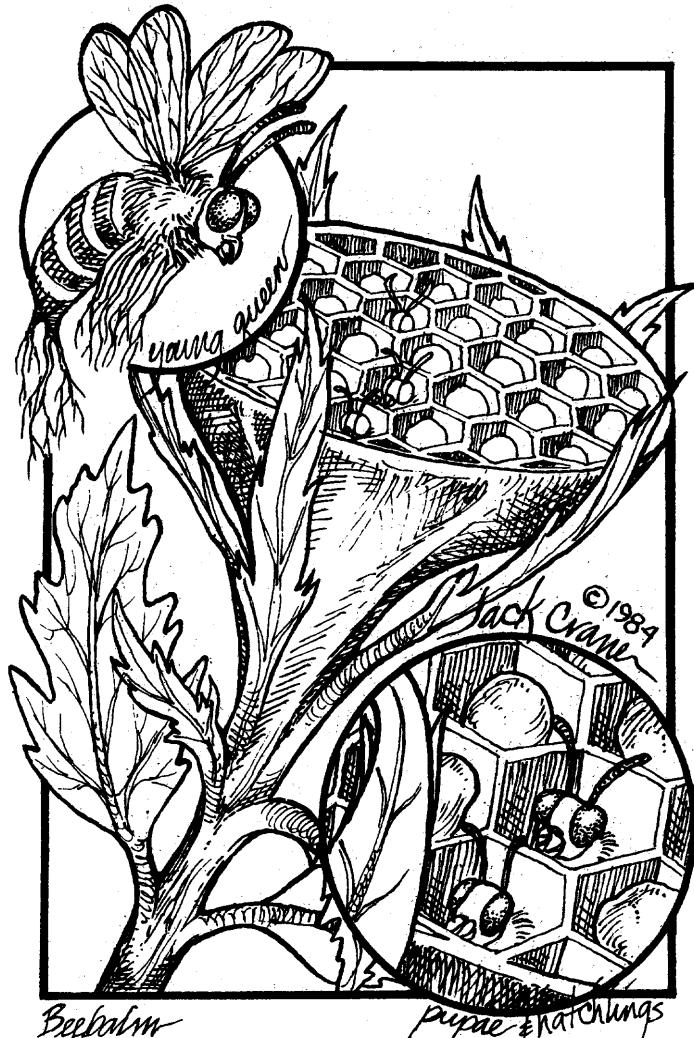
*This article and its accompanying artwork are dedicated to the memory of Steve Arnold, and to Gail and Buffy, who survive to perpetuate his ideals and spirit.*

— Jack Crane

**B**eebalm is a perennial, herbivorous, chaotic good species found world wide, although one particularly aggressive variety is rumored to inhabit some tropical zones. Beebalm creatures are easily agitated, but just as easily subdued with the use of smoke or other irritants. The

queens are free to fly until mating, whereupon they take root for the remainder of their lives. The eggs of the workers develop in the comb/flower structure and become free-flying in adult form for the duration of their lives. Their lives are spent caring for and feeding newly

developing eggs, larvae, and pupae. Reports of old, incredibly large hive formations have been noted throughout the world, and some hives have been successfully domesticated for the commercial value of the abundant nectar produced by the plants and the workers.



*Beebalm*  
Monard Didyma Bumblebidae

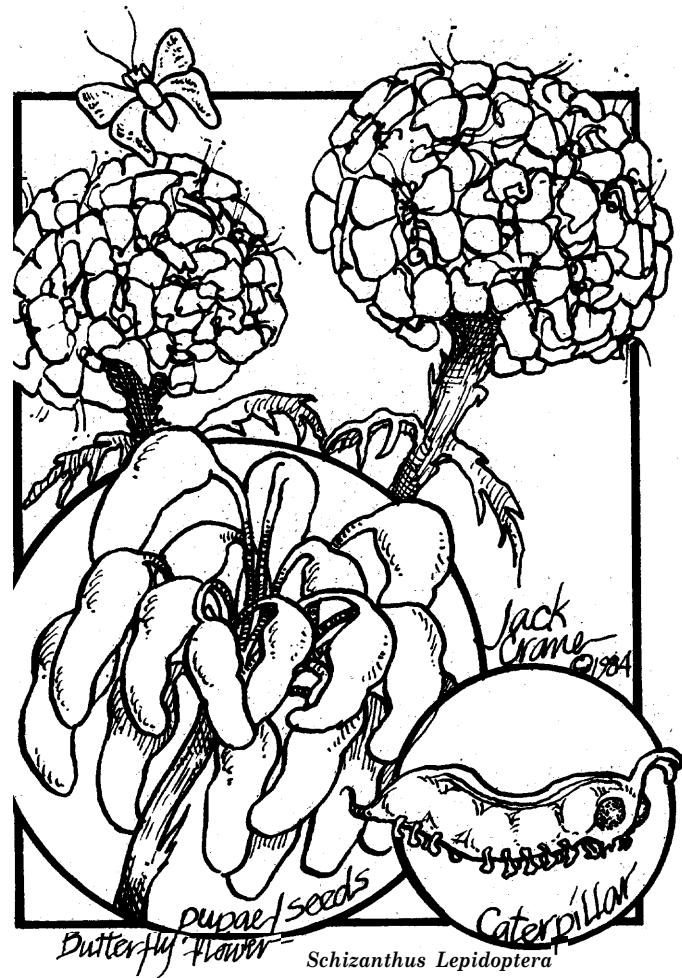
**B**utterfly flowers are annual, chaotic/good, omnivorous caterpillars/herbivorous adults, found in tropical and temperate zones. Hundreds of variations on this species exist world wide, each mimicking the true insect specimens native to that particular region. By luring pure strain butterflies into futile mating attempts, butterfly flowers trick them into carrying pollen from one flower to another, thus aiding butterfly flowers with necessary pollination and seed dissemination.

Young butterfly flowers are totally ambulatory and possess

ravenous appetites. They ultimately attach themselves in great numbers to the stalks of sturdy plants, whereupon they metamorphose into immobile adults. During the final days of the adult life cycle, males and the egg-bearing females break free of their bonds, and glory in a momentary burst of freedom. For this span of time the creatures exhibit a strange sensitivity to strong magical auras. When this occurs, hundreds or thousands of the beauties may be seen homing in on magical caches or beings that may be many miles away.



*Catnip*  
Nepeta Cataria Felidae



**C**atnip is an annual (appears perennially in tropical and subtropical regions), carnivorous, evil hybrid. It is also very prolific, bearing seeds every four to six weeks under ideal conditions.

Catnip has a mild narcotic effect on all mammals, but is neither addictive nor habit forming. While under its effect, animals will display enhanced vision and stealth and rather eccentric or even obsessive sanitary habits. Effects vary with dosage and time.

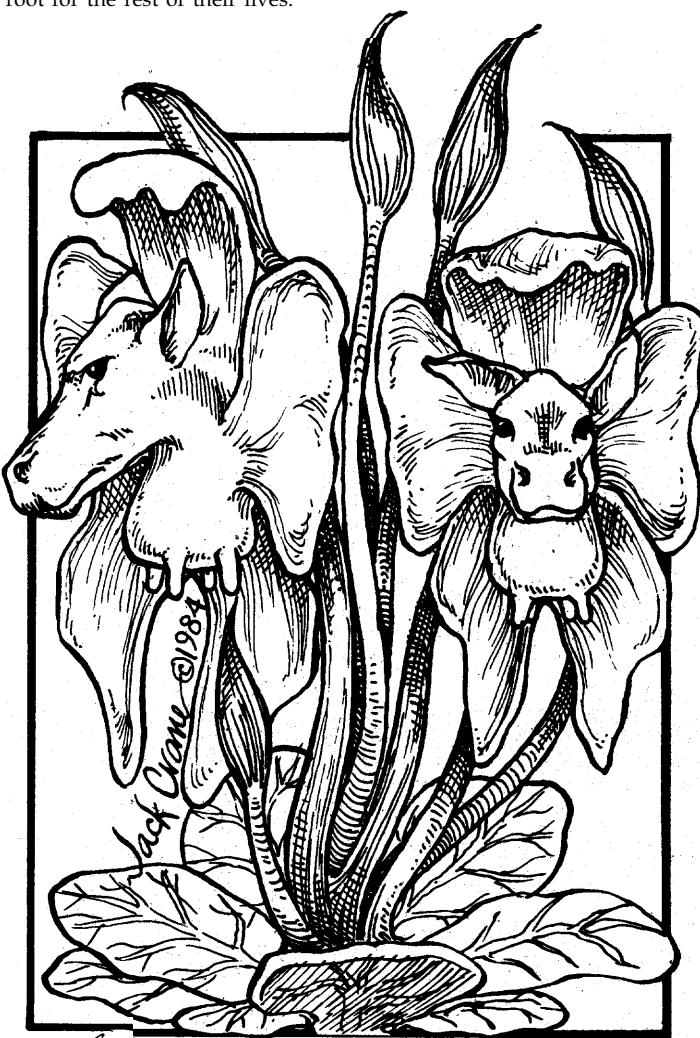
Catnip will never be found near horehound.

**C**obra orchids are perennial, herbivorous, evil creatures primarily found in tropical and subtropical zones, although they are occasionally found in protected areas in temperate zones. A cobra orchid bite may or may not be fatal, depending on the whim of the creature. The poison may be extracted from one much like it would from a true serpent.

Like the snake vine, cobra orchids propagate through the dispersal of egglike seeds in early spring to late fall in temperate zones, and year round in tropical and subtropical zones or when cultivated indoors. The newly hatched young are completely mobile until they shed their first skins, at which time they burrow their tails into the soil and take root for the rest of their lives.



*Cobra Orchid*  
*Darlington California Venoma*



*Cowslip* *Primula Veris Bovine*

**C**owslips are perennial, herbivorous, good creatures found in tropical, subtropical, and temperate zones. Appropriately named, cowslips exude large amounts of a slippery, odorous resin that collects in

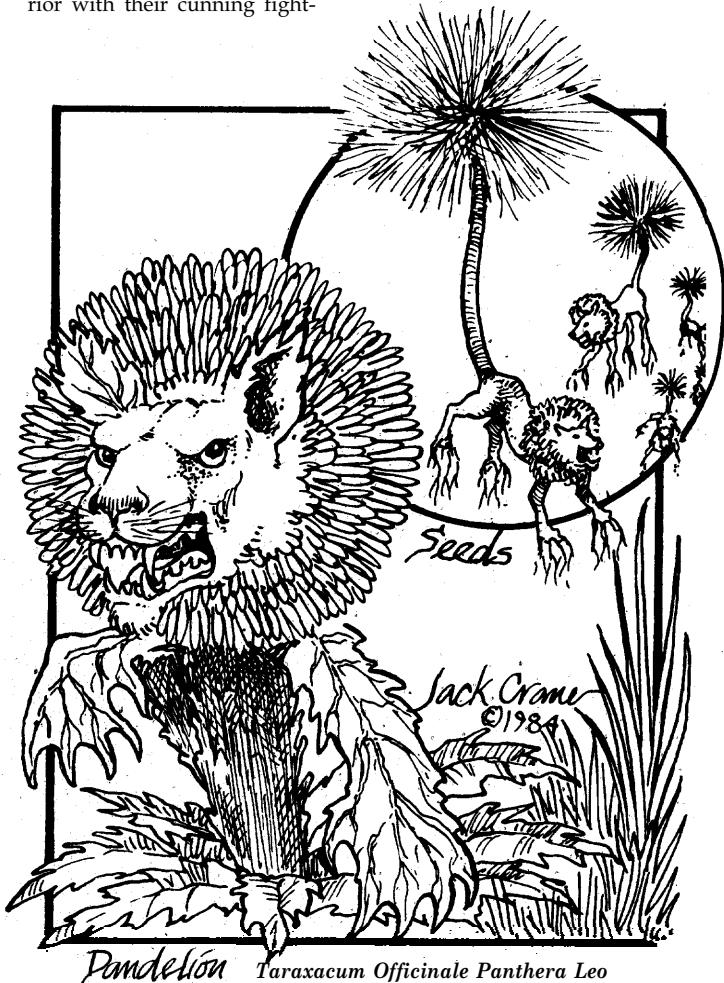
deep pools around the creatures. Below each flower small pouches form containing a palatable milky substance. The existence of this species is proof that Horus did indeed possess a sense of humor.

**D**andelions are annual (also appear perennially through the widespread dispersal of prolific seeds), chaotic/evil carnivorous creatures. They are fearsome creatures of great stealth and determination that will surprise even the most battle-hardy warrior with their cunning fight-

ing ability and tenacity.

The young kittens are scattered by seeds and take root immediately upon striking fertile soil, where they stay for the remainder of their lives.

Dandelions do not grow near horehound.



*Dandelion* *Taraxacum Officinale Panthera Leo*



*Foxglove* *Marrubium Vulgare Canine*

**F**oxglove is a perennial, omnivorous, neutral species found in the pastures, glens, and deep forests of temperate zones. Foxglove is an unusually shy species that is difficult to find, and even more difficult to capture or handle. Foxglove sap may be used as an herb to stimulate hearts.

Foxglove will never be found near horehound, and should not be planted in close proximity to it if cultivation is attempted.



*Horehound*  
*Digitalis Purpurea*  
*Canine Smartus*



*Lamb's Ear*  
*Stachys Olympia Muttonae*

**Lamb's ear** is a perennial, herbivorous, good species found in profusion throughout subtropical and temperate zones. Fibers from flower clusters are readily spun and woven into fabrics more durable, warm and prized than those of ordinary wool. The plant is tasty when broiled or stewed, but few can bring themselves to slaughter these gentle, doe-eyes creatures. The sap is often administered as a sleeping potion.

**Horehound** is a perennial, carnivorous, neutral species found in all latitudes. Horehounds have an uncanny sense of smell, and are frequently used in tracking or other olfactory-related tasks. These creatures also make excellent watch dogs, and can easily alert their owners to unusual sounds, scents, or movements, although they are frequently distracted by food.

Horehounds are often potted and domesticated, but they will never be found near the hybrids foxglove, tiger lily, dandelion, or catnip.

**Smartweed** is a perennial, omnivorous, neutral hybrid found world wide, including cultivated and urban environments, although rare. It may be potted for outdoor or indoor propagation with an incredible variety of subspecies and hybrids available, each capable of very specialized mental disciplines.

Although the most valuable and coveted of the entire plant/animal hybrid mutations, this species remains rare for two reasons. First, smartweed's existence and habits are repressed through a carefully structured organization of knowledgeable subversive individuals. A closed circle of magic-users and, more frequently, clerics of higher intellectual

levels keep smartweed a fairly well-guarded secret. Second, each plant/animal possesses an innate ability to camouflage and/or mimic all other botanical species. Smartweed is rarely seen in its true form. Smartweeds may occasionally be tricked into revealing themselves through an impulsive habit of correcting any erroneous or inaccurate statements made in close proximity.

A myth based on some historical substance maintains that twelve very rare plants of this species exist. It is further understood that twelve caretakers of unknown identities maintain these rarities and retain a staggering wealth of knowledge as a result. The possession of smartweed remains priceless.



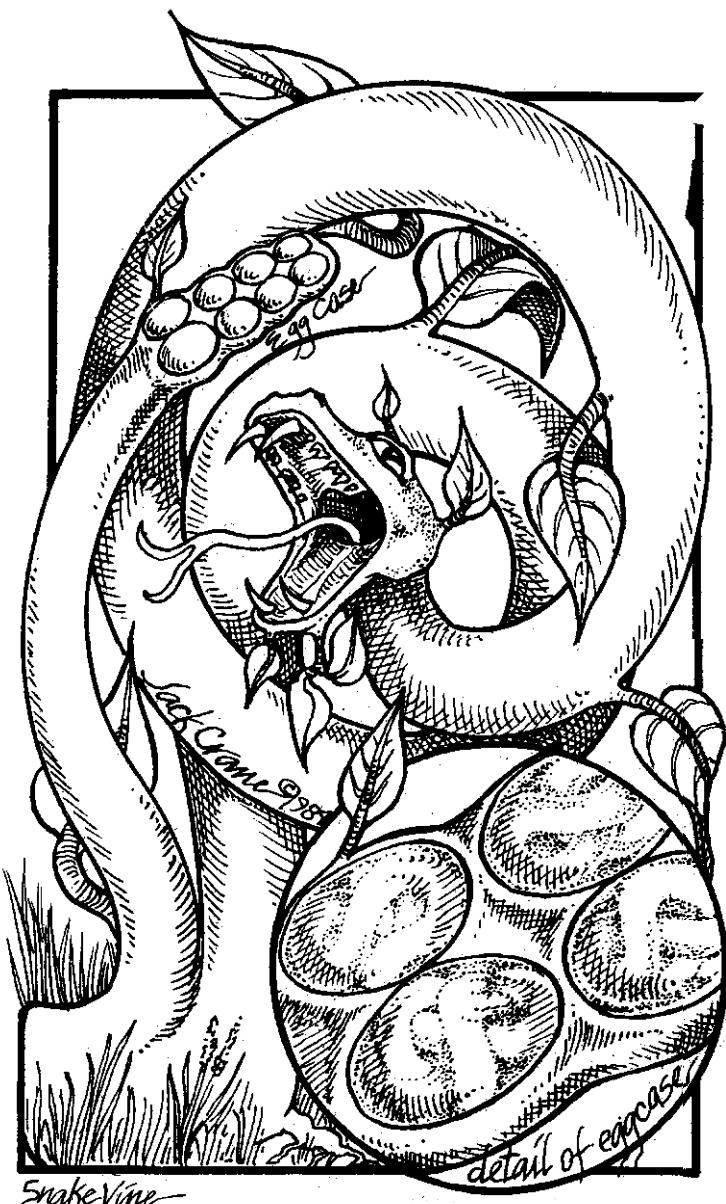
*Parrot Tulip*  
*Tulipa Ornithoglia Mimicus*

**Parrot tulips** are perennial, herbivorous, neutral creatures found in tropical and subtropical regions only. They are known for their brilliant plumage/petals. Unlike a smartweed, a parrot tulip is incapable of cognizant endeavors, merely entertaining itself by mimicking verbatim anything within its hearing range, including voices, noises, or abstract sounds. It has a finite memory limited to approximately several short paragraphs or 24 simple sentences. It is useful in delivering short messages or for eavesdropping.



*Smartweed*  
*Philodendron Polygonum Intellectus*

**S**nake vine is a perennial, carnivorous, evil hybrid not to be confused with the snake gourd, an equally dangerous predatory plant that frequents vegetable gardens and flower beds. A variety of this species can be found in virtually all forests, jungles, fields, and cities. A snake vine crushes its prey and swallows it whole, consuming victims many times its own size. The creature is anchored by roots and tendrils originating roughly in the middle of its body. The tail contains the seeds/eggs, and all creatures of the species have the ability to reproduce.



Snake Vine  
*Philodendron Monstera Reptilia Squamata*



Snapdragon  
*Antirrhinum Majus Draconis*

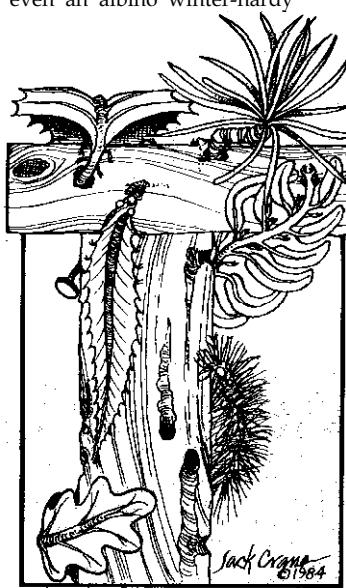
**S**napdragons are perennial, carnivorous, evil creatures found in a rainbow of colors all over the globe. They are capable of extracting methane (swamp gas)



Tiger Lily  
*Lilium Paradalinum*  
*Panthera Tigris*

**T**iger lilies are a perennial, carnivorous, chaotic evil hybrid originally discovered in Asia and the New World (although they now exist in many continents, from temperate to equatorial zones). Although rare, there is even an albino winter-hardy

variety located in pockets of the polar regions. Dispersal is accomplished by transplantation of rootstock, and does not occur naturally, therefore human intervention is essential in establishing its wide range.



Wormwood  
*Artemisia Absinthium Segmentus*

to be used as a defensive/offensive weapon. The snapdragon claims the honor of being the most vicious, aggressive, and dangerous of Hortus's mutations.

**W**ormwood are perennial, omnivorous neutral creatures found in all latitudes. Although they do not consume living wood, wormwood have a penchant for cured wood, leather, fabrics, and both dead and living flesh. With their rapacious appetite they can destroy a building in a day, a small boat in hours, or a body in minutes. Only the young are capable of motion, until as pupae they bond to a tree, cleverly dupheating its leaves or external features, and for all intents and purposes, become part of the plant. Upon maturity wormwood reproduce through asexual reproduction, and each spring during their adult life they drop hundreds of insatiable, winged young.

## Game review

# *Stalking* isn't fantastic

*STALKING THE NIGHT FANTASTIC* is a near-future role-playing game in which player characters are members of our government's ultra-secret supernatural fighting force, Bureau 13. Agents of the bureau come from all walks of life, but they have one thing in common: They have each, at one time or another, had a run-in with a supernatural or paranormal phenomenon. All the rules are contained in a 104-page, softcover 8½" x 11" book that sells for \$13.

*Stalking* uses 17 characteristics to describe a player character. Most of these attributes are determined by rolling 4d6 and subtracting 4, for a 0-20 range. Others are generated by rolling 2d20 and subtracting 20, or are computed from other scores. One (Piety) is determined by the player's decision. It's possible to have a characteristic rated 0, but there's no place in the game for such a character. The charts and tables throughout the book never cover any statistic that is less than 1. If your character has

a 0 strength, you might as well forget about using hand-held weapons; the character will never do damage. And what of the character with 0 intelligence?

Maybe patience and perseverance are the key. It is possible for a character to increase certain of his statistics by advancing in experience and paying out skill points he earns at new levels. If a character with 0 strength is lucky enough to live to second level, he can "get on the board." But there's another problem at the other end of the scale: A rule states that "statistics cannot be improved over 15," yet one of the charts indicates that it's possible to have an agility score greater than 40.

After generating a character's abilities, it's time to teach him some skills. There are two types of skills, general and medical. Skills are measured by "level," which should not be confused with "experience level" or "language level." Each skill level (to a maximum of 20) adds 5% to the prob-

ability of success when using that skill. Most starting characters are given a Primary Occupational skill (at level 5-8), two Secondary Occupational skills (each at level 3-6), plus anywhere from 6-22 other skills (each at level 1-4). Exceptions are characters with 0 intelligence, who presumably get no additional skills (the chart starts at intelligence 1), and medical doctor, who have a different schedule for acquiring skills. Each character also gets from 3-6 skills from Bureau 13, which include such things as magic use, supernatural studies, and demolitions. These skills start at level 1-4 each.

This skill generation system yields some good beginning characters, which is all the better because *Stalking* is a very deadly game. In fact, it is perhaps the most versatile game when it comes to killing characters; over 20 sub-systems are presented that can do away with characters, covering everything from asphyxiation to car crashes. However, few of the systems given are compatible with one another, meaning that GM and players alike will constantly refer to the rules in order to resolve conflicts between them. Not all damage-system varieties were "plugged" into one easy system; rather, several different systems were developed to arrive at the damage suffered. It drags out the action, and it's a very short road from there to boredom.

One of the most interesting statements in the *Stalking* rules is in the "Damage" section under "Level of Play." It states that there is a "Fast Play" combat system which disregards all the different forms of injury or death in return for quick, straightforward results. The system is less realistic and does less damage overall to the character than the "Recommended Play" combat system. The kicker is in the final paragraph of the section which reads, "In some ways the recommended system is a little more harsh than taking straight structure (sic) without side effects. This system is not recommended for NPC's or animals."

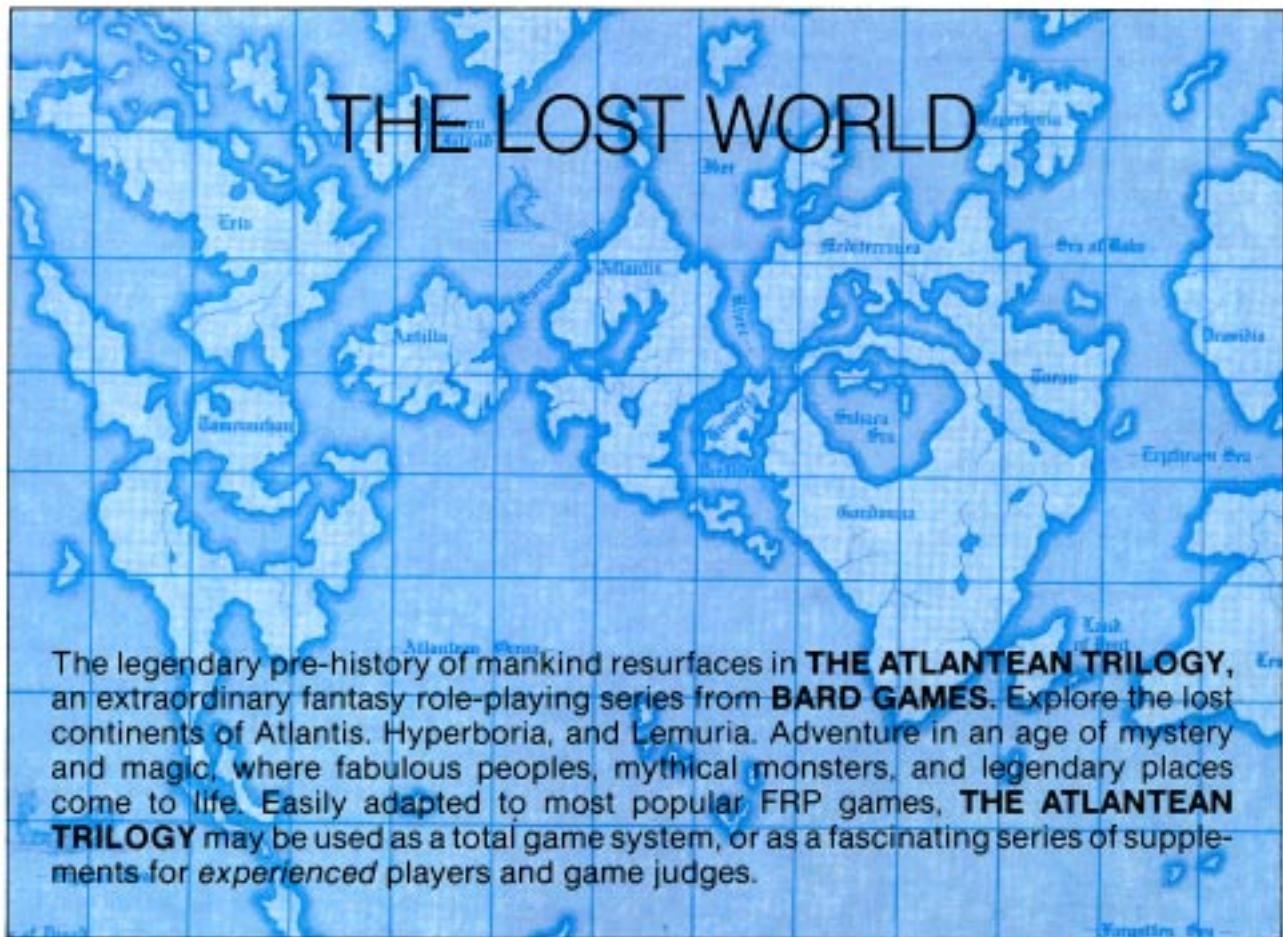
Obviously, this double-standard system imbalances encounters. While PCs struggle along favoring their sprained ankles and broken ribs, the NPCs waltz around practically unencumbered by their wounds until they drop dead. I highly recommend that one system or the other be used for both PCs and NPCs. Fair is fair.

Perhaps the strongest point in *Stalking*'s favor is its list of encounters. They run the entire gauntlet from African Witch Doctors and Aliens to Purple Monsters and Shapeless Disgusting Things. Some are very



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interesting and could have scenarios developed about them in their own right.

It looks like a lot of time and effort went into the design of *Stalking the Night Fantastic*. It's a shame that some of the effort was misguided. One thing that might improve the game would be to put the game sections into a logical order; charts and tables are scattered throughout the book. The two character types, medical doctors and bureau agents, were shoved into the sections on general skills, experience, and medical skills. An index would also be indispensable as a gaming aid, especially for a book of this size.

*Stalking the Night Fantastic* is not a terrible game, just a very near miss. The background history of how and why the Bureau exists is as feasible as the existence of dragons and dungeons in a medieval world. The game would suit "tinkerers" or those GMs who only buy a game to get inspiration for their own systems. Beginners or players who are not enthusiastic about putting in some overtime on reworking the rules would do better to stay away from this one.

*Stalking the Night Fantastic* was designed by Richard Tucholka, Chris Beiting, and Robert Sadler. It is available through retail outlets and by mail order from the publisher, Tri-Tac Inc., P.O. Box 61, Madison Hts. MI 48071.

— Reviewed by Jerry Epperson

## Game review

# The book's better

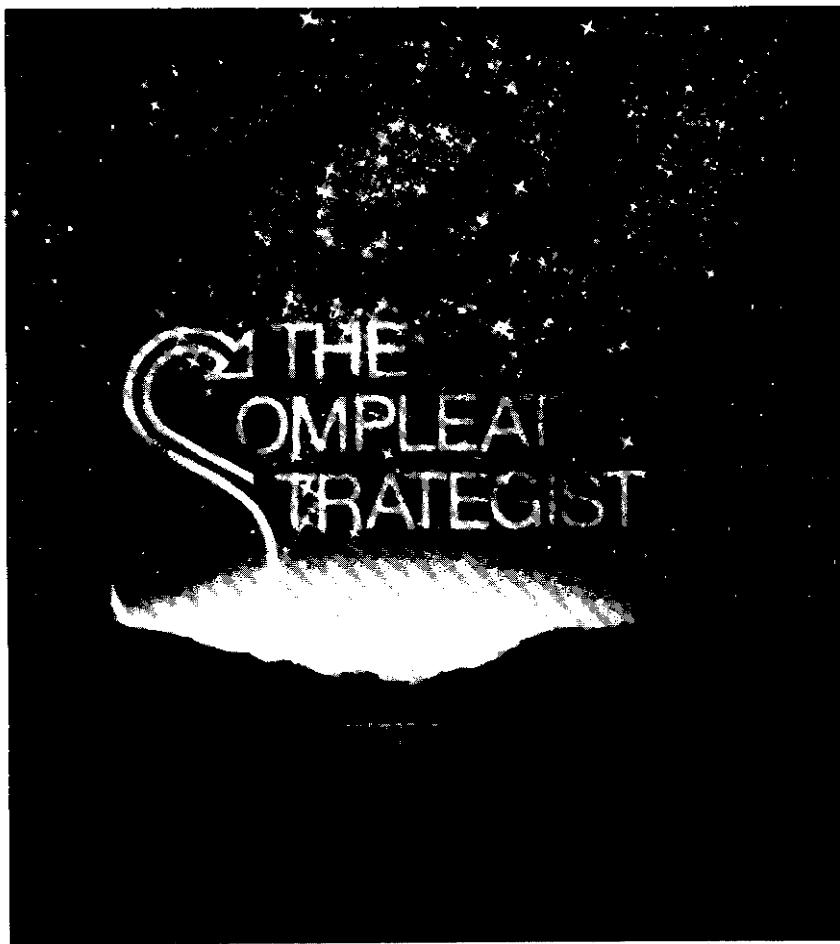
Joe Haldeman wrote *The Forever War*, a novel about a war that begins in our near future and stretches on for what seems like forever to its participants. Now Mayfair Games has given us *THE FOREVER WAR*, a game of tactical infantry combat on airless worlds at near absolute zero temperatures, also borrowing some window dressing from the novel as well as the novel's name. The book was outstanding; the game, unfortunately, is less than that.

In the novel, the war was between humans and aliens known as Taurans. Deep-space travel was accomplished by diving at relativistic speeds into collapsed matter stars ("collapsars") and emerging back into normal space light-years away. As might be expected, collapsars were focal points of conflict in the war, and most of the ground fighting took place on whatever iceball planets were nearest the collapsars, as each side tried to secure the planet (and the collapsar) as a base or take it away from the enemy. The novel also included combat on habitable worlds and combat between spaceships — both of which are absent from the game.

An important feature of the novel was the time-dilation effects suffered by those who travel at relativistic speeds. A spaceship that took a long time in transit was in effect traveling into its future, and an encounter with the enemy might then be dominated by the changes in technology it had benefitted from in the intervening years. (How would the Spanish Armada have fared against the fleet Jellicoe commanded at Jutland?) Of course, the ground troops aboard those ships would face similar problems — and they do, in the book, but the game inadequately addresses this element.

So, despite its title, the game called *The Forever War* is not a simulation of the war in the novel, but only a small part of it. As a game, it's not outstanding but it's not bad, either — a beer 'n' pretzels shoot-'em-up rather than a detailed but abstracted approach (a la *Squad Leader*).

The game has about 250 playing pieces made of thin die-cut counters. Most of the pieces are either infantry counters, representing individual human officers and troop units of up to four men (or eight Taurans), or support weapons. The map is mounted



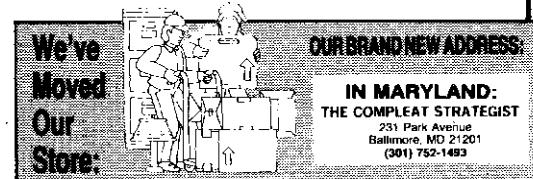
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Entry is \$7 for the rules and first move. Each move thereafter is \$3.

and partly geomorphic, puzzle-cut so that the pieces can be interlocked in several different ways. The terrain features are limited to mountains, craters, fissures, and hydrogen ice pools on what is otherwise a plain of smooth lava. Hydrogen ice is easy to move on but deadly to be caught on; a unit that is pinned in a hydrogen-ice hex is eliminated without further combat, since "hitting the dirt" causes hot parts of the battle suit to touch the ice with calamitous results.

The sequence of play is straightforward. The attacker moves first, conducts a four-phase turn, and then the defender does the same. The phases are: Rally, where the phasing player moves his officers (if any) and tries to "rescue" pinned units; Check for the appearance of Planetary Fighters and resolve their attacks (if any); Move units; and Resolve combat.

Combat takes place at the end of each player's turn and is simultaneous, so any unit can be involved in combat twice during a single game turn. The possible results are No Effect, Pinned, and Eliminated. A pinned unit cannot move or conduct fire combat (with a ranged weapon), but may melee with an enemy unit in the same hex. If a pinned unit suffers a second "Pinned" result (but this cannot take place in the same combat phase as the original pin), the unit is eliminated.

Melee combat occurs between opposing units in the same hex, and is resolved in the

same way as fire combat, except that carried weapons may not be used, and non-pinned units involved in melee get a favorable column shift on the Combat Results Table.

In the Designers's Notes at the end of the rules, designer James Griffin emphasizes the importance of morale and the disparities in technology caused by the time-dilation effects — yet these are reflected in the game in only a cursory manner. The Pin/Rally sequence deals with morale: a pinned unit stays pinned until it rallies, which is done on a roll of 1-3 on a six-sided die. For human units, the presence of an unpinned leader in the hex allows the die roll to be reduced by the amount of the leader's Morale Bonus (1 for a lieutenant, 2 for a captain, 3 for a major). Taurans have a group mentality and, as such, do not have leaders, but each unpinned Tauran unit in the same hex with a pinned Tauran reduces that unit's Rally die roll by one. Thus, for morale purposes all troops, and officers of a given rank, are identical in their effects, and these effects are minimal in any case.

Time dilation and the effect of differing technology is simulated by having troops be at one of five Tech Levels. Certain weapons are unavailable to units of lower Tech Levels, and the cost of troops and weapons increases with each higher level. Otherwise, the only effect of the different technologies is that in fire combat a unit of a higher Tech Level receives a favorable one-column shift

on the CRT for each Tech Level it is higher than the target unit.

The game includes ten scenarios and a point-value chart so that players can devise their own scenarios. The ones provided are frustratingly similar and do not really reflect any of the specific actions described in the novel. In all but one of the scenarios, one side is designated as the defender, who sets up units anywhere on the map at least 4 hexes from the map edge and secretly designates one of the bunkers in his force-mix as the entrance to that side's underground base. The attacker enters the map anywhere he desires, and the two forces have at it. Play proceeds until (a) one side is wiped out, (b) the defender's base entrance is occupied by the attacker for two consecutive turns, or (c) time runs out, in which case the winner is the side that occupied the base entrance when the last turn ended.

As a reflection of the novel on which it was based, *The Forever War* falls short. To be sure, this is a difficult thing to do well, but the lack of "book accuracy" in the scenarios makes one wonder if the attempt was even made in earnest.

As a game by itself, *The Forever War* is more successful. It is reasonably fun to play, and action moves quickly. But neither the quality of the components nor the design justifies the \$17 price tag. Or, maybe, it just depends on how much you want to have left for your beer and pretzels.

— Reviewed by Steve List



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# WHITEOUT

A TOP SECRET® game adventure

by Merle Rasmussen



# OPERATION: WHITEOUT

## YOUR OBJECTIVE: GET THE GOODS ON CON

### — AND DON'T CATCH COLD DOING IT

#### AGENT FILE

##### CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND MISSION BRIEFING

**GEOGRAPHY:** Whiteout Base is located on a flat, icy island at 64 degrees 15 minutes south, 60 degrees 30 minutes west, ten miles away from Camp Perez. It is situated on property claimed by Great Britain, Chile, and Argentina. Estimates of its human population range from 80 to 120.

**HISTORY:** In 1947, President Gabriel Gonzalez Videla of Chile established several research stations to reinforce his country's claim to the Antarctic peninsula. Although geothermal activity was detected very close to the site in question, the station was abandoned after two years because the Chilean government was unwilling to finance its continued operation.

The site lay dormant and unoccupied until 1971, when Atlantis Enterprises contacted Salvador Allende Gossens (the new president of Chile) and offered to buy the station. Both Argentina and Britain protested the sale of the station on the basis of the international treaty of 1959 which stated that no person, organization, or government may own land in Antarctica until 1989. Allende ignored their protests and sold the station to Atlantis Enterprises.

Beginning five months ago, routine satellite reconnaissance of Antarctica showed evidence of construction and expansion at the Atlantis site. Best information suggests that Atlantis Enterprises has revived an old association with an ultra-survivalist group, the Children of Neptune (CON). This group has been connected with subversive activities including drug trafficking, the selling of military secrets, and the counterfeiting of Swiss francs.

Only in the last year has any detailed information surfaced about CON. The agency has thwarted two CON operations (the Floating Island Mission and the Mercenary Atoll Mission). The purpose behind the construction of a floating island and a nuclear-powered floating drydock can only be guessed at. Plans and blueprints belonging to CON have been discovered for entire floating cities and submarine cities. Now, it is apparent that CON is on the way to assembling one of these future-survival cities in Antarctica.

Atlantis Enterprises has ignored all attempts at contact by the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR) and governmental agencies of several countries.

Each time an aircraft approaches the research station and requests landing instructions, the pilot is informed that the airfield is under localized whiteout conditions and is advised to fly to another nearby research outpost if the craft must set down. (Localized whiteouts are not uncommon in Antarctica, but the reported whiteout conditions at the Atlantis base have become so prevalent that the research station is known to outsiders as "Whiteout Base.")

It is known that research is carried on at Whiteout Base, even though exact discoveries and experiments have not been reported to the scientific community. Outside researchers hypothesize that the residents of Whiteout Base are involved in agricultural and geothermal energy research.

**CURRENT STATUS:** Responding to the urgings of SCAR members, the UN Security Council decided to inspect the research station. A little more than two weeks ago, a plan was conceived to have a team of SCAR scientists, including a representative of the Security Council, fly to the research station in an effort to open a line of scientific communication between the station and other Antarctic bases.

The scientific team embarked, flew toward the research station, and requested landing instructions. The pilot was informed that severe whiteout conditions over the airfield made landing impossible. The scientists feigned radio failure, approached unchallenged, and landed safely — under clear skies.

The scientists were greeted at the airport by a guard who was efficient but not hostile. He transported them to the research station, which looks from the surface like a cluster of greenhouses.

The team stayed in the complex as visitors for about 24 hours. They were given tours by qualified personnel of certain areas of the complex, and were politely but firmly denied access to other locations. They were under constant personal supervision by at least one guard, in addition to any tour guides.

When the scientists tried to question personnel about the "whiteout" ruse, everyone claimed to know nothing about it except the leader of the outpost, who identified himself as William Billeter, Canadian by birth, and the head administrator of the complex called Atlantis II. Billeter explained that airport personnel are instructed to discourage casual visitors by claiming a whiteout exists, because the station's work is centered around self-sufficiency, and too

much interaction with the outside world would defeat the purpose of their research. Billeter assured them that when visitors do land, they are treated cordially but encouraged to leave fairly promptly.

The leader explained further that Atlantis II was involved in researching agriculture in polar regions, with the intent of achieving self-sufficiency. He said the project is funded by Atlantis Enterprises.

The scientists identified themselves and explained the reason for their visit. Billeter agreed to their request to set up a temporary outpost about 500 yards southeast of Atlantis II to conduct their own research, and allowed the team to maintain constant radio contact from their base.

The scientists used the outpost to keep 24-hour surveillance on Atlantis II. Activity outside the complex was almost negligible, much less than would be expected for a base of its size. No aircraft or ground vehicles arrived or departed during the surveillance period, which lasted more than 11 days. During this time, the scientists made brief, scheduled visits to the complex every three days to exchange meteorological data. Their requests for other information were refused.

On day 12 of the surveillance, geiger counters at the scientists' camp detected significant levels of radiation emanating from Atlantis II. They contacted the base, asked about the cause, and were told that information was privileged. The scientists detected the source as a cloud of radioactive steam that was airborne and beginning to drift. They requested permission to leave the base, and were told that their plane would be ready for takeoff in one hour.

They abandoned camp, keeping all their surveillance records and notes on the complex, as well as maps and photographs they had procured at Atlantis II. Just after taking off, they contacted the UN Security Council and sent a coded radio message concerning the radioactive cloud. Shortly thereafter, the Ellsworth base had this contact with the SCAR aircraft, at 1000 hours on June 2:

*"Ellsworth, this is Penguin One. Come in, Ellsworth. Over."*

*"This is Ellsworth. We read you, Penguin One. Over."*

*"Ellsworth, we are airborne from Whiteout Base. Prepare to receive a complete report as soon as we land at Ellsworth. Our ETA is 1200 hours. Over and out."*

*"We'll be ready for you, Penguin One. This is Ellsworth, over and out."*

One hour later, this message was received from Penguin One:

*"Ellsworth, this is Penguin One. Do you copy, Ellsworth? Over."*

*"We copy, Penguin One. This is Ellsworth. Over."*

*"Ellsworth, we are having fuel problems. We've just passed our PNR [point of no return] and the gauges are dropping fast. We'll try to put her down on the Filchner Ice Shelf. Our current position is 73 degrees South, 47 degrees West. We're going down."*

There was no further contact.

## ASSIGNMENT

Because of the mystery about what happened to Penguin One, the Security Council has decided to increase the intensity of its investigation of Atlantis II. SCAR intends to send an investigative team to Atlantis II to discover the source of the radioactive steam, the complete plans of William Billerter, and his intended means of achieving his goals. The group has contacted your agency to assemble such a team. Violence is to be kept to a minimum.

Your team and its equipment will be transported from Christchurch, New Zealand, to Ellsworth Base, Antarctica. At Ellsworth your team is to immediately

report to Dr. Michael T. Jameson for supplemental verbal instructions. Jameson can be found in the base library. He is an agency contact working for the UN Security Council.

It is suggested that your team transport all issued equipment from New Zealand, since Antarctic bases are poorly equipped for espionage missions. A limited supply of cold-weather equipment, food, water, and vehicles can be obtained from any Antarctic base.

### Agent player character list

Choose one of the following agents to play. The Administrator will give you an AGENT DOSSIER after you have chosen an agent to play.

### Assassination bureau

*"The Mugger,"* a vengeful vigilante. Stalks lowlife criminals with a large-caliber handgun.

Olga, former trainer for an Olympic wrestling team. Likes to crush her opponents with her bare hands.

### Confiscation bureau

*"Klepto,"* picks up souvenirs unrelated to missions. Has large collection of tools and clothing.

Will B. Driver, getaway driver. Enjoys tailing and high-speed chases with any vehicle.

*"Paper Chaser,"* bureaucratic paper-shuffler with piloting skills. She enjoys adventure and danger.

### Investigation bureau

Miss Ecoute, interpreter and language arts specialist. She speaks English-92, French-90, Spanish-88, German-40, and Russian-91.

Pierre Piton, French mountain climber. Carries his own crampons and 50' of nylon rope.

*"Dynamo,"* fast-talking, fast-acting natural leader; at least he thinks so. Enjoys conversation.

### Ellsworth Base

#### Supplemental verbal instructions

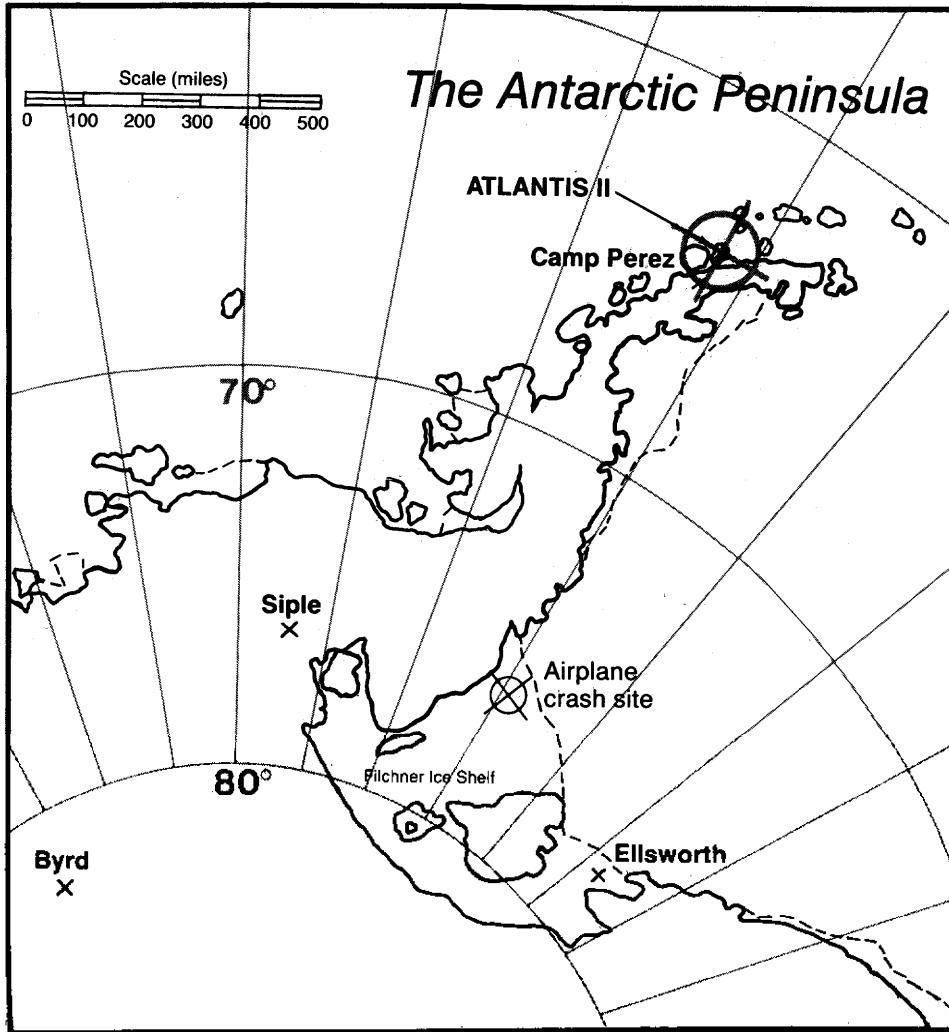
It has been determined that Penguin One crash-landed on the Filchner Ice Shelf. The Soviets recovered the bodies of the SCAR scientists and the aircraft's 'black box.' The bodies and the black box were turned over to the Americans at Ellsworth. No maps or photos were reported found by the Soviets. It is assumed that the maps survived in a special flameproof container now hidden under snow or wreckage at the crash site.

Your team must decide how to proceed. You may fly to the crash site to assist in the search for the maps and evidence, or you may set course for another base. Under the treaty of 1959, any base in Antarctica is accessible to you, since no base can refuse permission for a plane to land. This should also apply to Atlantis II.

Once you arrive at Atlantis II, the exact means of penetration is left up to you. The agency suggests that your team feign aircraft engine trouble and make a forced landing on the Atlantis II airstrip. From there you are to attempt to infiltrate the main complex, collect data, and return to base to report your findings. At no time are you to reveal your true assignment to Atlantis II personnel.

If chemical, biological, or radiological (nuclear) warfare devices are encountered in the field, you should make no attempt to disarm or contain the devices. Proper authorities (decontamination or bomb disposal units) should be notified at once, even at the risk of jeopardizing a delicate mission. Caution supersedes any political or national allegiances.

It is currently winter on the continent, which means there is continual darkness in most places south of the Antarctic Circle. The average temperature on the coast is -40 degrees Fahrenheit. Any overland traveling is extremely hazardous. The extreme cold tends to jam conventional weapons. Trigger guards prevent mitten hands from pulling triggers. Bare flesh begins freezing after one minute of exposure to sub-zero temperatures, and bare skin freezes to metal. The agency recommends that agents avoid outdoor battles entirely.



# ADMINISTRATOR'S

## FILE

### Adventure preparation

Information in the AGENT FILE should be given to players in the order it is presented here. First, they should read the Christchurch, New Zealand Mission Briefing. Then players make their character selections based on the brief descriptions (or use their own characters), and they depart for Ellsworth Base to finish organizing supplies and receive their final verbal instructions.

A player who chooses a pregenerated character should first determine the bureau classification of the character he wishes to play. Next, he should either choose an available character from that bureau, or select one randomly. In any event, the player's choice is made without knowing details such as the character's exact ability ratings. One of the eight Agent Dossiers will be given to the player by the Admin once the player's decision is made. The personal traits of the characters are fixed, and may not be adjusted upon receipt of a dossier.

Once the players have completed their preparations for the game, the referee finishes setting the stage by bringing the player characters from the mission briefing to the place where the mission is to begin. This is usually a matter of providing a brief narrative (such as, "After obtaining supplies and getting organized, your group is taken via transport plane from Christchurch, New Zealand to the United States Base, Ellsworth").

### Plot synopsis

The Children of Neptune (CON) began as a survivalist group dedicated to insuring the survival of its members in the event of a world war or other global tragedy. At that time, the Children of Neptune practiced natural food farming, supply hoarding, outdoor survival, weapon use, and other survivalist techniques. The group seemed relatively harmless until William Billeter became their leader.

Billeter, a former Arctic explorer, is a popular, dynamic speaker and businessman. Under his leadership, group membership and revenues increased throughout the world. Billeter contacted several investors to provide capital to form a natural food franchise. This franchise became incorporated under the name Atlantis Enterprises.

Soon afterward, the Children of Neptune began planning their own colony. The idea of Atlantis II was born in 1970, and the search for a natural undeveloped building site began. In 1971, Atlantis Enterprises purchased a plot of land on the Antarctic Peninsula where a Chilean research station once stood. In 1981, Atlantis Enterprises purchased 72 prefabricated, heavily insulated housing units and the components for a geodesic dome. Thousands of feet of pipe, hundreds of fuel oil barrels, sixteen Quonset huts, and tons of assorted non-perishable supplies were shipped to Chile.

One year ago, supplies and CON personnel began congregating in Chile before being shuttled by plane and ship to the Antarctic Peninsula. Two runways were built with two hangars and temporary housing. A pipeline was driven deep into geothermal rock. Slush pumped down the pipe became superheated steam to supply power for the base. During the brief warm season, trenches were bulldozed in the sun-softened snow. Seventy-two prefabricated housing units were placed in the trenches. Corrugated metal was used to form curved snow roofs over the subsurface passageways; the snow froze in position, and the curved corrugated metal was removed. Clear acrylic Quonset huts were built on the surface of the snow between the snow-roofed passageways. The Quonset huts were connected with plywood hallways. In the center of the buildings and tunnels, a 60-foot-tall geodesic dome was constructed. The dome is 150 feet wide and is composed of 665 transparent, triangular panels supported by an aluminum skeleton.

CON personnel wasted no time moving into the finished base and setting up house-keeping. A meteorological tower and a radio antenna were raised. Live plants, food, clothing, and laboratory equipment arrived by the planeload. Housing units became mess halls, storage areas, maintenance shops, and laboratories. Atlantis II became the long-awaited colony of the Children of Neptune.

In the meantime, CON has evolved from a survivalist group into an ultra-survivalist faction planning world domination after the superpowers mutually annihilate each other. With Atlantis II as its headquarters, CON plans to rule the survivors of the earth's northern hemisphere, using a fleet of floating islands. These islands are to be constructed in nuclear-powered floating drydocks. At present, CON has constructed Atlantis II in Antarctica, a floating drydock in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, and a floating island in the Great Barrier Reef.

In recent years, CON activities came to the attention of the world's peacekeeping authorities when CON became involved in crime to raise money for construction. In what is referred to as the "Floating Island Mission," international authorities financed a small team of agents to retrieve stolen Swiss franc printing plates. Once the manufactured floating island had been invaded and secured, an intensive investigation of the premises followed. Vague references hinted at CON's involvement in the counterfeiting scheme. It is conjectured that CON was intending to produce counterfeit Swiss francs in order to finance the construction of Atlantis II. Apparently, CON personnel had no intention of flooding the world's financial market or extorting money from the Swiss government.

Agents investigating the activities of Colonel Martin "Mad Merc" Strikewell at

a small atoll in the Northwest Pacific uncovered another CON construction. A floating drydock used to construct floating islands confirmed the existence of CON and increased the possibility of additional floating islands. The Mercenary Atoll Mission also hinted at the existence of another CON construction in Antarctica.

CON is attempting to make Atlantis II self-sufficient for two major reasons. First, to insure the continued survival of their members in the event of a supply-halting world holocaust or a blockade against them on the part of outside countries, they must be prepared to provide themselves with the necessities of life.

Second, in 1959, twelve countries proclaimed a treaty that prevented any territorial claims in Antarctica from being settled for 30 years. Although the Children of Neptune have staked out a large tract of land, neither CON nor any country owns land in Antarctica. In 1989, CON hopes to claim and own part, if not all, of Antarctica. CON bases its hopes on the fact that although several countries have permanent scientific outposts and military bases in Antarctica, none of the countries have a truly self-sufficient colony. CON's claim will have at least some validity, since entire families have taken up residence at Atlantis II. Also, most Antarctic bases depend on food, fuel, and supplies from home countries. Atlantis II hopes to grow its own food supplies, use naturally occurring geothermal energy, and manufacture all it needs to function as an independent community.

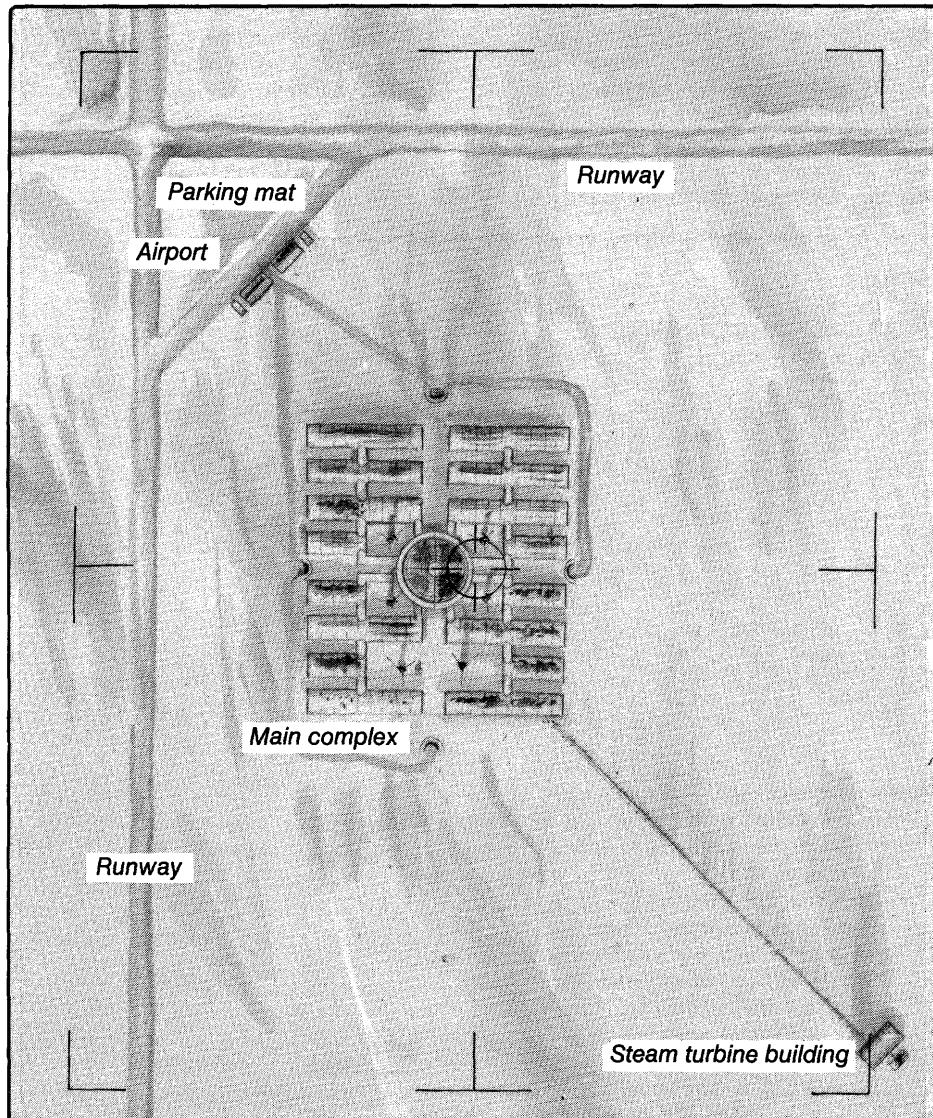
However, now that CON's crimes have been made known to the world, Billeter feels the group's survival is threatened. He has instituted a new offensive plan. A team of CON engineers has begun constructing small nuclear devices designed to destroy the other Antarctic bases. Billeter hopes that setting off a single nuclear explosion at a United States or Soviet base will cause an international crisis. If one side blames the other, a war could break out, increasing Billeter's chances of continental or world domination. If a war does not break out, Billeter plans to claim responsibility for the bomb and threaten to destroy other Antarctic bases unless Atlantis II is recognized as a political entity and given land of its own in Antarctica.

Recently, while workers were building one of the nuclear weapons, an "accident" occurred in the laboratory. This incident forced radioactive dust up an exhaust pipe to the surface. The laboratory was not contaminated, but the outside snow and the pipe were.

Most of the residents of Atlantis II are ignorant of the outside world's discovery of the floating island and the drydock, and are not guilty of any wrongdoing except their devotion to Billeter. They are intentionally kept ignorant of outside events by Billeter and his small group of advisers, who make all the policy decisions.

A small secret group of dissenters, calling themselves "625," want to flee Atlantis II.

# Atlantis II aerial view



If Billeter captures any agents, members of "625" may help the agents get away — if the agents agree to take them along.

## Plot directions

It is impossible to accurately predict the activities of player-character agents assigned to a free-form adventure. The adventure is riddled with clues, rumors, characters, and objects intended to provoke action and steer the agents. At certain points in the plot, they must make vital decisions. It is important that the agents be reminded of the urgency of their mission from time to time so that their actions are self-motivated, even if incorrect.

The action should begin with the agents being called to a Mission Briefing at a United Nations Security Council safehouse in Christchurch, New Zealand (see the AGENT FILE). The agents may be attacked by thugs in a car waiting outside the Christchurch safehouse. These thugs are not associated with the mission, but the action will get the players in the mood for later fast action during the investigation. The thugs can be armed with any hand-held weapon the Admin chooses. The thugs'

character traits are left for the Admin to determine as well.

At Ellsworth Base, the agents meet their contact for the verbal briefing and then decide how to set out. They may refuel their plane immediately at Ellsworth and fly themselves to either the crash site, Camp Perez, Atlantis II, or someplace else. A pilot will not go with them, which means that at least one agent in the group must have piloting skill. The agents may choose to park their aircraft and proceed on foot or by other means, but this is ill advised for distances of more than a few miles. If agents want to embark on an overland trek, remind the players of the time and distance factors involved that make this impossible.

Agents won't find anything important if they visit the site of the Penguin One crash — no map case, no radiation on the wreckage. Based on the reports made by the surveillance team when they were still on the island, the agents should realize that they can probably get into Atlantis II easily, so they don't need maps and photographs beforehand.

Camp Perez is 10 miles from Atlantis II. The characters may choose to refuel and fly

themselves to Atlantis II from there, or proceed on foot or by land vehicle across the ice floe. If the team flies in and asks for landing permission at Atlantis II, personnel there will tell them that the landing strip is currently under whiteout conditions and the aircraft cannot be safely directed to land. (Actual weather conditions depend on what was rolled for the current six-hour game period.)

The Children of Neptune will welcome anyone who lands at their airstrip, and will offer the agents mechanical assistance and fuel. If the agents don't want lodging, they will be expected to stay at the airport until their plane is ready to fly again (which would make this a short mission).

If the agents landed the plane because of alleged engine or mechanical trouble, Yang will offer to inspect and repair the aircraft; it will take him 1 - 10 hours to discover that nothing is wrong. He will report this fact to Billeter, who will instruct him to "Snowbank" the aircraft. (See the section on Code Names.)

Yang will only attempt to sabotage the aircraft if all the agents leave the airport area. To cover the time he needs to spend alone with the plane, Yang will tell the agents that he could not find any engine trouble or control problem with the aircraft, but discovered structural wing damage. Repairs can be made in 1-10 hours (Admin's choice or random), and in the meantime they are welcome to stay as guests in the main complex. Agents may be forced to stay because of approaching nightfall or bad weather. Of course, they can simply accept the invitation (and probably lose the services of their aircraft) as a means of getting inside the complex. When they enter, the male agents are housed in Unit #23 and female agents in Unit #8.

If the agents approach overland in vehicles, they will be detected on radar one mile away. Yang will approach them in a Sno-cat to find out where they are going and invite them into the main complex.

Agents who approach on foot won't be detected by radar, but will be seen 80% of the time on the base's infrared surveillance equipment. Two guards will come out on open snowmobiles to investigate. If the agents are discovered and remain friendly, they will be invited to stay in Unit #23 and Unit #8. If agents are unfriendly, they will be hunted by guards and shot at by Atlantis II personnel using heavy machine guns placed inside empty fuel oil barrels around the surface of the complex.

An agent who commits a crime at Atlantis II will be considered armed and dangerous. Guards will attempt to arrest the agent(s) without harming Atlantis II personnel. Captured agents will be turned over to SCAR for legal action. Agents who escape the complex and attempt to leave via their own aircraft will discover their aircraft has been sabotaged — when it crashes an hour after they're in the air.

## WEATHER

The climate of Antarctica affects play directly. Temperature and wind combine to create deadly weather conditions. Agents who do not take the weather into account may be injured or killed.

Weather conditions should be checked once every six game hours. Roll two ten-sided dice, and find the number rolled on the first die in the left-hand section of the

Weather Conditions and Damage Chart in either the coastal or interior column. ("Coastal" is any place within 50 miles of the sea; "interior" is the rest of the continent.) This number corresponds to wind velocity and determines what row of the temperature chart to consult. To use the temperature chart, add +4 to the second die roll if agents are in an interior location, and then find the resulting number in the top

horizontal row of the temperature chart. This number corresponds to the air temperature. By cross-indexing the temperature result with the wind speed result, the Admin can find the base number of Injury Points a character will receive in every ten minutes of exposure under these weather conditions. Agents who travel on foot or in unheated vehicles will be subject to the full dangers of the Antarctic cold.

## WEATHER CONDITIONS AND DAMAGE CHART

## WIND CHART

First die:

Coast	Inter.	Conditions	Speed (mph)
1	1	Calm	0-1
	2	Light air	1-3
2	3	Light breeze	4-7
3	4	Gentle breeze	8-12
4	5	Moderate breeze	13-18
5	6	Strong breeze	19-31
6	7	Fresh gale	32-46
7	8	Whole gale	47-63
8	9	Hurricane	64-96
9	10	Hurricane	97-130
10		Hurricane	139-200

**TEMPERATURE CHART (degrees F.)**

**Second die:** (may be modified)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
+10	0	-10	-20	-30	-40	-50	-60	-70	-80	-90	-100	-110	-120
0	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7
1	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7
2	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7
3	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8
3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8
4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	8
4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	8	8
5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	9
5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	9	9	9
6	6	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9

## Whiteout

Any **boldface** result on the Weather Chart indicates the potential for real white-out conditions. Sometime during the next six hours (Admin's discretion), snow will begin falling or blowing so hard that the horizon will become indistinguishable from the foreground. These conditions will last for 1-100 minutes (roll percentile dice). Visibility becomes very limited at best. Small open crevasses become hidden from view (see the Terrain rules below). Attempting to travel overland or in the air without a compass will cause the travelers to become lost (Admin's discretion). Any aircraft caught in a whiteout should not try to land or take off. If either of those maneuvers is attempted, refer to the Explosive Use Against Vehicles Chart on page 37 of the TOP SECRET® Game Rulebook.

## Weather damage modifiers

When calculating weather damage, the number of Injury Points to be subtracted from a character's Life Level may be modified by one or more of the following conditions:

**Character is:**

Standing, lying, or inactive . . . . .	.+3
Walking or moderately active . . . . .	.+0
Running or extremely active . . . . .	-.3
Immersed in water or wearing wet clothes . . . . .	.+5
Missing mittens or boots . . . . .	.+2
Missing mittens and boots . . . . .	.+4
Protected from the wind . . . . .	-.2
Moving at less than 20 mph in unheated vehicle without a cab . . . . .	.+1
Moving at 20-60 mph in unheated vehicle without a cab . . . . .	.+2
Moving faster than 60 mph in unheated vehicle without a cab . . . . .	.+3
Wearing inexpensive parka . . . . .	-.1
Wearing moderately priced parka . . . . .	-.2
Wearing expensive parka . . . . .	-.3
Wearing custom parka . . . . .	-.4
Wearing a space suit . . . . .	-.5

## TERRAIN and MOVEMENT

Characters who travel overland without using marked roads run the risk of stumbling into crevasses (cracks in the icy surface). The danger of crevasses is further heightened by the fact that they can be hidden beneath a thin layer of ice and snow. An intelligently outfitted convoy of vehicles moving over unmarked terrain usually has a large crevasse detector in the lead. Agents can procure a crevasse detector vehicle 25% of the time from any base, and with this can travel fairly safely.

The Admin should roll percentile dice once every game hour of travel and use the Terrain Chart to determine present conditions. Unmarked crevasses will not occur along marked roads or paths.

## TERRAIN CHART

Dice roll	Terrain	Crevasses
01-40	Smooth	None
41-58	Rough	None
59-66	Smooth	Sm & open
67-74	Rough	Sm & open
75-78	Smooth	Sm & hidden
79-82	Rough	Sm & hidden
83-86	Smooth	Med & open
87-90	Rough	Med & open
91-92	Smooth	Med & hidden
93-94	Rough	Med & hidden
95-96	Smooth	Lg & open
97-98	Rough	Lg & open
99	Smooth	Lg & hidden
00	Rough	Lg & hidden

*Rough terrain is crossed at one-half normal movement, regardless of the means of overland locomotion used.*

*Small* crevasses are 1 - 10 centimeters wide by 10-100 centimeters long and deep. *Medium* crevasses are 10-100 centimeters wide by 1-10 meters long and deep. *Large* crevasses are 1 - 10 meters wide by 10-100 meters deep.

Agents can always avoid open crevasses (the sort that are not hidden by ice or snow crust) by simply jumping over or walking around them — except for small, open crevasses encountered during whiteout conditions; those crevasses are treated as if they were hidden.

Vehicles can cross any small crevasses without slowing down or being affected.

Any vehicle taken across a medium crevasse will be stuck for 1-10 minutes, and every passenger will take 1 Injury Point of damage from the sudden stop. Any vehicle driven across a large crevasse is stuck permanently, and every passenger takes 2 Injury Points of damage. Hidden crevasses can be detected and avoided by any character who succeeds in a percentile dice roll vs. his Coordination. Each character must make this roll if a group is spread out on foot; if more than one character occupies the same vehicle, check the driver's Coordination for success in detecting and avoiding crevasses. If a character's Coordination is

less than the dice roll, he (or his vehicle) slips and falls into the crevasse, doing damage to the individual or each passenger as follows:

Small crevasse — Twisted ankle, 1 Injury Point of damage.

Medium or large crevasse — Damage from falling (see p. 33 of the TOP SECRET Game Rulebook).

Only the lead character risks taking damage if characters travel single file on foot. Characters on foot may choose to rope themselves together. Modify all of the tied leader's damage from falling downward by one half.

of combat. Revolvers will misfire on a roll of 99-00, but will not jam. (See page 25 of the TOP SECRET Game Rulebook.)

## PHYSICAL SECURITY

All exterior doors can be assumed to be locked (-/20) at night. Interior doors are locked 50% of the time. Desks, files, and drawers can be considered locked 75% of the time. Persons inside private rooms will probably have the door locked and chained as well. Security chains have a Difficulty rating of +10. Vehicles have the keys in them 5% of the time.

## LIGHTING

Most rooms will have a light switch inside the door on the wall to the right, and from 1-10 light sources in the room. Unless otherwise noted, most ceiling lights operate from a light switch and are of the fluorescent-tube variety.

## TRANSPORTATION CHART

Mode of movement	Top speed (mph)	Velocity (ft/turn)	Range (miles)	Seating capacity	Chance of access
Snowshoes/skis	3	25	—	—	100%
Dogsled	25	185	1000	3	5%
Open snowmobile	65	480	144	3	90%
Cabbed snowmobile	55	405	126	2	70%
Sno-cat	30	220	370	8	50%
Sno-cat w/detector	15	110	370	6	25%
Hovercraft	75	550	330	10	—
Helicopter	120	880	300	4	25%
Cargo plane	170	1250	1500	15	95%

*Top speed* of a vehicle cannot be maintained indefinitely; adjust foot-per-turn figures downward proportionately when vehicles are traveling at less than top speed. *Chance of access* is the probability that any single base will have one or more pieces of the listed equipment.

Agents will almost always use one of the modes of movement given on the Transportation Chart. In dire circumstances when a character is on foot without snowshoes or skis, his base movement rate is one-half normal (walking speed 1½ mph). This rate is cut in half again, to ¾ mph, in rough terrain.

*With snowshoes or skis:* Characters move at normal rates (walking speed 3 mph).

*Dogsled:* Atlantis II has a pair of 6-dog sleds. The dogs may pull at full speed for only 15 minutes; their usual speed is four miles per hour.

*Snowmobiles, open or cabbed:* These vehicles are usually available at any base. When available, they can be borrowed for the mission. Cabbed snowmobiles have heated enclosures, offering protection from the elements.

*Sno-cat:* These are enclosed, heated vehicles with skis on the front and treads on the rear. A Sno-cat with crevasse detector is much like a regular Sno-cat, with a spider-web framework extending from the front bumper that detects crevasses before the vehicle passes over them. The vehicle can be driven faster than 15 mph, but the detector will not function properly at higher speeds.

*Hovercraft:* Two of these experimental aircraft are in Antarctica, one at Ellsworth Base and the other hidden at Atlantis II. The hovercraft at Ellsworth can only be borrowed if all agents on the mission travel

in it. Since hovercraft are experimental, there is a 10% chance each hour the vehicle is driven that it will break down. An agent with an AOK value of more than 75 in Electrical or Mechanical Engineering can repair any breakdown in 1-100 minutes. Both hovercraft are enclosed and heated.

*Aircraft:* The Administrator must keep in mind that bad weather affects low-flying aircraft. A helicopter dropping off passengers might be hit by a whiteout, become disoriented, and crash. Parachutists jumping into gale-like winds will be blown miles off course and be subject to hazardous landings. It is suggested that the Administrator describe the weather conditions and let the agents make the decision on whether to act.

All engine-powered vehicles may carry extra fuel, which can double their maximum range. Broken windows that are not repaired will cause vehicles to cease being enclosed and heated, exposing passengers to the elements. No base will loan personnel to serve as pilots or drivers who would assist the agents on their mission.

## EQUIPMENT

The standard parka consists of pants and a padded pullover coat with a hood. Face masks, goggles (sunglasses during daylight), mittens, and boots are standard supplementary clothing. Because of the increased padding of a parka, all damage from combat is halved. This includes both projectile and hand-to-hand combat.

Standard weapons should have the trigger guards removed so they can be used with gloved or mitten hands. Because of the extreme cold, most guns used outdoors will misfire on a roll of 96 and jam on a roll of 97-00 during the hit determination dice roll

## PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS

Whenever an agent in the main complex is outside a unit or the dome, there is a chance of encountering a passing pedestrian or seeing a random object. These encounters can occur anywhere except outdoors. The frequency of checking depends on the time of day as indicated on the following charts. A second encounter will not occur until the first encounter is ended. In some cases, the specified random encounter may not occur if the non-player character involved was injured or put out of action during an earlier encounter.

## DAYTIME ENCOUNTER CHART

(10am to 10pm)

Roll percentile dice for every 10 minutes.

Dice roll	Encounter
01-25	None.
26-35	Sound of footsteps.
36-45	Shadows moving on the wall in the distance.
46-50	Sound of unintelligible conversation in the distance.
51-60	Maintenance person cleaning or doing repair work. Will ignore most people unless he/she is approached.
61-70	Someone calls out a name and approaches agent with an outstretched hand in greeting. The person has mistaken the agent for someone else.
71-80	A group of 1-10 children on their way to the indoor pool. Five pet penguins accompany the children.
81-90	Security person approaches on routine circuit. He is checking doors to be sure they are locked. He will not speak to the agent or stop unless the agent stops him.
91-00	Cracking and low-level rumble of icy walls settling.

**NIGHTTIME ENCOUNTER CHART**  
(10pm to 10am)

Roll percentile dice for every 20 minutes.

<b>Dice roll</b>	<b>Encounter</b>	71 - 75	Maintenance person cleaning or doing repair work. Will ignore most people unless he/she is approached.	86-90	Security person approaches on routine circuit. He is checking doors to be sure they are locked. He will not speak or stop unless the agent stops him.
01-25	None.				
26-35	Faint light in the distance.				
36-55	Sound of distant running footsteps headed south.				
56-65	Faint distant laughter in unknown direction.	76 - 80	Someone calls out a name and approaches the agent with a hand outstretched in greeting. The person has mistaken the agent for someone else.	91-95	Cold, chilly draft from above showers agent with minute ice crystals falling from ceiling.
66-70	Young couple walking hand-in-hand toward dome.	81 - 85	Hysterical woman (Vera) approaches, begging group to take her away from Atlantis II, back to someplace warm.	95-00	Five pet penguins waddle toward characters expecting to be fed. The birds will not leave until they are fed or until agents run out of sight.

**PERSONAL TRAIT VALUES & WEAPONRY CHART**

Name	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD	OF	DP	EV	DA	MV	LL	HTH	SV	QRC
ABBY	63	26	40	91	29	56	74	59	41	43	159	10	104	100	
ABEL	90	46	21	64	54	56	60	55	51	55	167	11	141	106	
BILL	95	76	103	96	82	87	92	86	82	85	285	20	177	168	e, t
BONA	56	64	45	35	43	46	41	50	55	45	147	10	111	105	
CARL	72	60	75	76	62	89	83	68	75	76	236	15	147	143	
CORA	90	46	21	64	54	56	60	55	51	55	167	11	141	106	
DALE	46	92	41	40	35	95	68	66	94	65	185	9	140	160	
DAWN	73	35	57	74	85	75	75	55	55	80	205	13	128	110	
EARL	28	62	65	50	50	68	59	56	65	59	161	9	93	121	
EDNA	49	79	40	31	80	45	38	55	62	63	134	9	111	117	
FAY	63	26	40	91	29	56	74	59	41	43	159	10	104	100	
FELIX	76	49	39	24	69	71	48	37	60	70	186	12	136	97	
GAY	40	91	99	86	60	99	93	89	95	80	238	14	135	184	
GUY	85	93	88	54	95	53	54	74	73	74	226	17	158	147	
HANS	38	53	27	65	30	99	82	59	76	65	164	7	114	136	
HOPE	29	75	99	81	40	58	70	78	67	49	186	13	96	145	
IAN	40	91	61	86	60	44	65	89	68	52	145	10	108	157	
IDA	89	96	79	81	86	77	79	89	87	82	245	17	176	176	
JACK	36	91	46	89	91	46	68	90	69	74	128	8	105	159	e
JANE	33	33	27	76	68	51	64	55	42	60	111	6	75	97	e
KAREN	70	51	63	95	61	91	93	73	71	76	224	13	141	144	
KEN	46	91	89	79	62	27	53	85	59	45	162	14	105	144	
LANA	61	45	60	76	84	65	71	61	55	75	186	12	116	116	
LANCE	94	48	66	82	87	49	66	65	49	68	209	16	143	114	
MAE	52	92	75	32	78	92	62	62	92	85	219	13	144	154	e
MARK	91	70	62	56	62	79	68	63	75	71	232	15	166	138	e
NADA	43	41	65	70	55	77	74	56	59	66	185	11	102	115	f
NEIL	33	50	79	81	86	34	58	66	42	60	146	11	75	108	f
OPAL	89	96	46	45	37	76	61	71	86	57	211	14	175	157	f
OTIS	90	50	92	99	78	63	81	75	57	71	245	18	147	132	e
PAMELA	85	51	91	70	80	47	59	61	49	64	223	18	134	110	
PAUL	66	80	70	90	68	91	91	85	86	80	227	14	152	171	d
RENE	68	105	36	53	42	56	55	79	81	49	160	10	149	160	f
RITA	95	90	94	47	61	96	72	69	93	79	285	19	188	162	e
SARA	68	70	81	93	55	90	92	82	80	73	239	15	148	162	
SAUL	70	79	90	80	62	90	85	80	85	76	250	16	155	165	d
THORA	75	94	84	74	38	42	58	84	68	40	201	16	143	152	f
TOM	100	81	35	27	35	97	62	54	89	66	232	14	189	143	e
UNA	80	66	62	94	65	61	78	80	64	63	203	14	144	144	
VERA	65	75	60	91	56	100	96	83	88	78	225	13	153	171	e
VIC	60	93	28	45	26	50	48	69	72	38	138	9	132	141	d
WADE	85	62	88	36	95	53	45	49	58	74	226	17	148	107	d
WANDA	52	89	62	54	95	33	44	72	61	64	147	11	112	133	k, t
XENIA	68	105	36	53	42	56	55	79	81	49	160	10	149	160	k, t
YANG	95	90	94	47	61	96	72	69	93	79	285	19	188	162	k, t
YING	95	90	94	47	61	96	72	69	93	79	285	19	188	162	k, t
ZEKE	68	70	81	93	55	90	92	82	80	73	239	15	148	162	k, t
ZOLA	70	79	90	80	62	90	85	80	85	76	250	16	155	165	k, t

## THE PERSONNEL OF ATLANTIS II

Statistical and personal information on the residents of Atlantis II is given in the Personal Trait Values and Weaponry Chart and the Occupation and Location Chart that accompany this text.

Personal trait values are abbreviated in the chart headings: PS = Physical Strength; CH = Charm; W = Willpower; CO = Courage; K = Knowledge; CD = Coordination; OF = Offense; DP = Deception; EV = Evasion; DA = Deactivation; MV = Movement Value; LL = Life Level; HTH = Hand-to-Hand Combat Value; SV = Surprise Value. Statistics not given in these listings can easily be computed, using the traits given along with some imagination.

Those characters who carry weapons have the necessary information listed under the QRC (Quick Reference Code) column; weaponry includes a loaded gun plus one full extra clip of ammunition.

The Occupation and Location Chart uses some abbreviations: STB = Steam turbine building; QH = Quonset hut; SMB = Small metal building.

## CODE NAMES

Individuals with knowledge of code names may divulge that information or acknowledge its use (as a password, rumor or whatever) as appropriate to any given situation. The use of code names by non-player characters is at the discretion of the Administrator. Player characters may encounter problems if they indiscriminately use inappropriate code names. The names and their meanings are:

*Windfall*: CON is attempting to make Atlantis II self-sufficient for two reasons, code-named *Wind* and *Fall*.

*Wind* (W): First, it is necessary to CON's survival to provide its members with the necessities of life in case they are cut off from the rest of the world. This could occur if outside countries form a blockade against CON or if a world war does break out and there is nowhere left to obtain supplies.

*Fall* (F): In 1959, twelve countries proclaimed a treaty that prevents any territorial claims in Antarctica from being settled for 30 years. At the moment, no country owns land in Antarctica. In 1989, CON hopes to claim part, if not all, of the continent.

*Breakaway*: Now that CON's crimes have become known to the world, Billeter feels the group's survival is threatened. He has instituted two new offensive plans, code-named *Break* and *Away*.

*Break* (B): A team of CON scientists has begun constructing small nuclear devices designed to destroy the other Antarctic bases. Billeter hopes that setting off a single nuclear explosion at a United States or Soviet base will cause an international crisis. If one side blames the other, a war could break out, increasing Billeter's chances of continental or world domination.

*Away* (A): If a war does not break out, Billeter plans to claim responsibility for the bomb. He will threaten to destroy other

## LOCATION AND OCCUPATION CHART

Name	Sex	Occupation	Location		Code name knowledge
			Day	Night	
ABBY	F	Botanist	Dome	#19	F W
ABEL	M	Nuclear engineer	#68	#1	BDF W
BILL	M	Leader	#45	#20	A B D F S W
BONA	F	Electrical engineer	#68	#3	BDF W
CARL	M	Mechanical engineer	#66	#4	BDF W
CORA	F	Hydraulic engineer	STB	#1	BDF W
DALE	M	Chemical engineer	#68	#2	BDF W
DAWN	F	Welder	#59	#4	BDF W
EARL	M	Fitter	#59	#3	BDF W
EDNA	F	Maintenance	#53	#2	BDF W
FAY	F	Maintenance	#53	#20	A B D F S W
FELIX	M	Metal laboratory	#59	#19	W
GAY	F	Radar operator	#61	#21	W
GUY	M	Radio operator	#22	#46	W
HANS	M	Doctor	#32	#21	F W
HOPE	F	Doctor	#15	#5	F W
IAN	M	Nurse	#32	#25	F O T W
IDA	F	Nurse	#15	#5	F W
JACK	M	Cook	#13	#25	F T W
JANE	F	Cook	#34	#5	F W
KAREN	F	Cook's assistant	#13	#5	F W
KEN	M	Cook's assistant	#34	#25	F T W
LANA	F	Janitor	#22	#41	W
LANCE	M	Laundrer	#29	#25	T W
MAE	F	Carpenter	#58	#6	F T W
MARK	M	Electrician	#43	#25	F T W
NADA	F	Babysitter	#11	#5	F W
NEIL	M	Babysitter	#11	#25	F O T W
OPAL	F	Teacher	#12	#5	F W
OTIS	M	Teacher	#12	#25	F O T W
PAMELA	F	Radio operator	#46	#5	W
PAUL	M	Vehicle mechanic	#38	#26	F W
RENE	M	Vehicle mechanic	#38	#26	F W
RITA	F	Nuclear assistant	#67	#6	BD T W
SARA	F	Geologist	#64	#6	F T W
SAUL	M	Nuclear assistant	#67	#25	BD T W
THORA	F	Equipment operator	#66	#6	B D F T W
TOM	M	Meteorologist	#61	#26	W
UNA	F	Metallurgist	#66	#6	F T W
VERA	F	Plumber	#52	#6	F O T W
VIC	M	Diesel mechanic	#51	#26	F W
WADE	M	Purser	#27	#26	F W
WANDA	F	Guard/pilot	#45	#5	S W
XENIA	F	Guard/pilot	#7	#45	S W
YANG	M	Guard/pilot	SMB#2	SMB#2	B S W
YING	M	Guard/pilot	Q H # 1	Q H # 1,	S W
ZEKE	M	Guard	STB	STB	F S W
ZOLA	F	Guard	#7	#45	F S W

Antarctic bases unless Atlantis II is recognized as a political entity and given land of its own in Antarctica.

*Thawout*: Among the Children of Neptune are a group of dissenters who disagree with Billeter's policies and have secretly joined together into a conspiracy against Billeter. They call themselves "625" after the numbers of the housing units they live in (Units #6 and #25). The code names they use are *Thaw* and *Out*.

*Thaw* (T): This is the code name for an act sabotaging Billeter's projects. Thora is responsible for "accidentally" releasing the

radioactive dust up the chimney from Unit #66, alerting the ill-fated scientific inspection team. Agents who are captured by Billeter's forces may be freed by members of "625" performing a *Thaw* operation.

*Out* (O): The members of "625" want to escape Atlantis II with the 20 children from the nursery (Unit #11) and school (Unit #12). They will try to slip a message to any Atlantis II visitor asking the visitor to help them escape.

*Dustcloud* (D): While workers were constructing a nuclear weapon, an accident occurred in the nuclear laboratory. This

accident forced radioactive dust up an exhaust pipe to the surface. The laboratory was not contaminated, but the surface snow and the pipe were.

*Snowbank* (S): This is the code name for quieting all who visit Atlantis II. All unwelcome visitors are silenced after leaving so they can't tell anyone what they have seen. The SCAR investigation team was the victim of a *Snowbank* operation. Small holes were punched in their plane's fuel tanks so they would run low on gas and either have to return or crash. Billeter may be planning to *Snowbank* the player characters by sabotaging their vehicles (Administrator's choice).

## LANGUAGES

All agents and NPCs speak fluent English. Other languages known by the pre-generated agent characters are listed in their respective dossiers. Languages other than English will possibly have limited utility on this mission — but a foreign language might be handy if two or more characters want to converse without being understood by others. The Admin can assign fluency in other languages to the personnel of Atlantis II as desired.

## MILITARY INFORMATION

Agents should not be allowed indiscriminate military ordnance, use of military

resources, or the control of military personnel. If the agent's agency or government had wanted military involvement, they wouldn't have sent agents on an espionage mission in the first place.

A secret agent should never be allowed to request photographic analysis after surveillance has been conducted by a spy plane or a satellite. An agent should never be allowed the use of a cargo-carrying helicopter with rockets or given command of 25 paratroopers. Not only is such use of military force unwarranted on a low-profile espionage mission, it is expensive, wasteful, and beyond the scope of the TOP SECRET game.

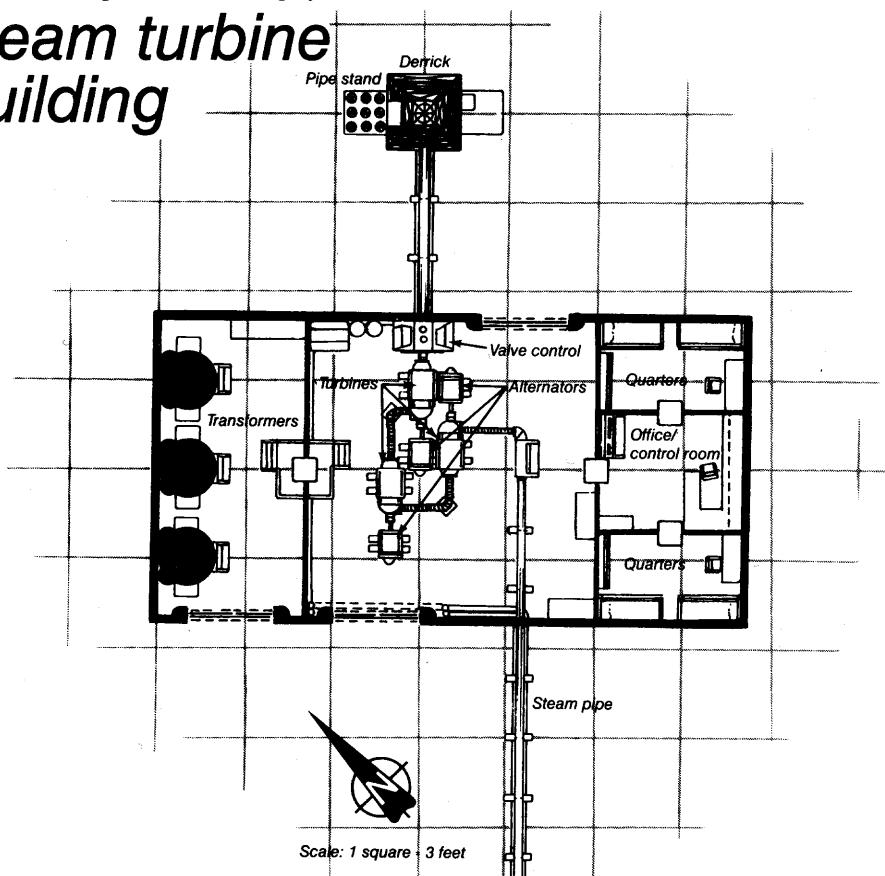
## ENCOUNTER AREAS

General descriptions for encounter areas are given, but much remains for the Administrator to describe, such as furnishings and other small details.

Entry into any outdoor environment can be gained from any point outside the perimeter of a map. Those who exit the map area are assumed to have escaped any immediate danger and will generally not be pursued unless they have broken the law.

Player characters will seek information through conversation with the characters they encounter. Answers to routine or insignificant questions will usually be obtainable. For more in-depth queries, use the "Contacts" rules from the TOP SECRET game, depending on the means employed by the player characters. The Administrator should play the roles of the encountered characters during this verbal interplay.

# Steam turbine building



## Airport

The Atlantis II airport consists of two hangars and two sheet metal structures. All four buildings are heated by steam pipes in the floor. Each hangar contains a helicopter, a cargo plane, and a Sno-cat, all fueled and ready to operate. The Sno-cats are used to maneuver aircraft, as emergency vehicles, and as transports from the airport to the main complex. Barrels of aviation fuel and gasoline surround the buildings.

Aboard each cargo plane is a 55-gallon barrel strapped down tightly with restraints. A geiger counter brought near it will detect a very hot radioactive source. The barrel contains a miniature nuclear device (security rating -/75) powerful enough to produce a crater 100 feet in diameter and a blast zone with a one-mile radius. If the device is detonated, anything within the crater will

be disintegrated. Any character in the blast zone will suffer 1-100 Injury Points. The bombs are meant to be radio-detected on separate frequencies, but the controls to detonate the bombs are not aboard the airplanes; Billeter has the detonators in his possession.

Sheet metal building #1 contains a kennel housing 12 Alaskan huskies (+3/-1), two dogsleds with six harnesses each, and a locker of raw frozen meat.

Sheet metal building #2 contains the quarters of Yang, an 8' tall giant employed as a guard and airport caretaker. An intercom connects Yang's quarters with the security office in the main complex.

If an aircraft lands on the Atlantis II airstrip, Yang will be dispatched with lighted hand-held signals to direct the aircraft toward the parking mat in front of the airport. If the aircraft follows his signals and parks, he will assist passengers with unloading and then take them and their luggage to the west opening of the west tunnel at the main complex. Yang is armed. His parka, boots, and mittens are bulletproof.

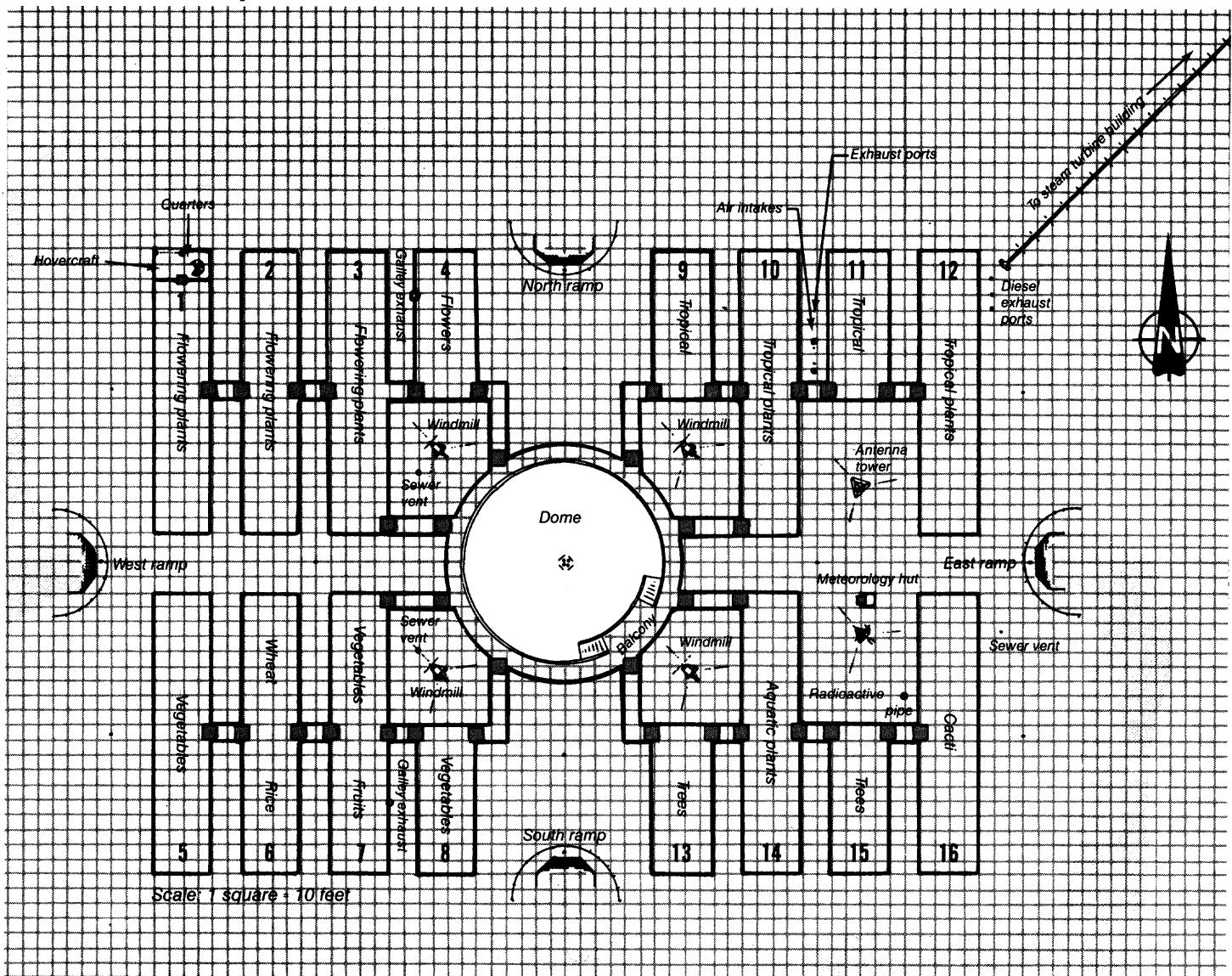
Yang has an identical twin brother, Ying, who lives in Quonset Hut #1 at the main complex. Ying is usually available to make a trip to the airport and help transport large groups of visitors, or to bring part of a group in to the main complex while Yang stays at the airport with the others. Neither Yang nor Ying will allow any visitors inside the airport buildings without supervision.

## Steam turbine building

This structure stands beside the drilling platform derrick. The entire complex, including this building, is heated and powered by steam. From the derrick attached to the steam turbine building, a slushy ice-water mixture is pumped down to the geothermal rock beneath the Antarctic surface. The mixture turns to steam, which is piped back to the surface and routed against a series of turbine blades. These blades rotate generator shafts, which in turn create electricity. The steam condenses into hot water and is piped throughout the complex for heating purposes.

Zeke is quartered within the steam turbine building as a guard and technician.

# Main complex, surface level



## MAIN COMPLEX SURFACE LEVEL

The Quonset huts and the geodesic dome emit a violet light through their transparent walls. This violet glow is reflected on the snow outside the complex and can sometimes be seen up to a mile away or on clouds above the complex. The violet color comes from ultraviolet lamps used to raise plants in the Antarctic darkness.

The main complex is relatively silent at all times. Voices and other sounds that might carry between the huts are drowned out by the sound of the wind blowing ice crystals against the exterior walls. The dome and the Quonset huts are heated by hot water pipes that run through the concrete floors of each building.

The transparent dome and Quonset huts cannot be penetrated by standard bullets; explosives or incendiaries must be used to cut through the tough acrylic surface.

### Dome

The central dome stands 45 feet above the surface of the surrounding snow and ice.

It extends another 15 feet down into the snow and is 150 feet across. The dome is composed of 665 triangular transparent panels supported by an aluminum gridwork.

Hanging inside the top of the dome are incandescent and ultraviolet lamps, and four surveillance cameras. The cameras are wired to the security control room; they point at four sections of the balcony, but do not scan the lower-level pathways, double doors, or floor.

Access to the floor of the dome is gained through four sets of double doors leading from the main tunnels of the complex. Grass-covered paths lead from each doorway, intersecting in the center of the dome's floor. The parts of the floor sectioned off by the paths contain gardens and a heated pool.

On the upper level of the dome, eight narrow corridors leading from the Quonset huts connect by doorways to the dome's balcony. Two stairways in the southeast quadrant of the balcony lead to the lower level, coming out on either side of the pool.

Beside each pair of double doors in the dome is a button that opens or closes the doors unless overridden by security.

Personnel present, Daytime: Abby.

### Quonset huts

Sixteen transparent acrylic Quonset huts are connected to each other and the dome by plywood corridors. Both incandescent and ultraviolet lamps hang from the tops of each hut. Along the walls of each hut are waist-high tables filled with growing plants from around the world. Huts #1 through #4 contain flowering plants. Huts #5 through #8 contain food crops. Huts #9 through #12 contain tropical plants. Huts #13 through #16 contain trees, aquatic plants, and cacti.

All plants are grown by experimental methods. Some are started hydroponically in warm-water pipes with holes drilled in them for the roots to grow through. The seedlings are then planted in nutrient-rich soil on the waist-high tables or placed floating on Styrofoam rafts with their roots hanging in a fertilizer solution. Some vine plants climb vertical strings while others cling to

A-shaped frames, multiplying the available growing space. Ceiling-mounted conveyors move hanging root systems through nutrient-rich misting troughs. The plants respond favorably to ultraviolet light, grow to maturity, and are harvested.

Any agent with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Agriculture or Botany will be able to identify the various experimental growing methods. These methods include aeroponics, hydroponics, trickle irrigation, floating matrixes, conveying systems, intercropping, and nutriculture. Stilts, available in several of the Quonset huts, are used to reach the tops of some plants.

Quonset Hut #1 contains a plywood room with a garage-style overhead door leading to the outside. The room contains a fully fueled hovercraft, a spiral staircase leading down, and the personal belongings of Ying, the 8' tall twin brother of Yang (see the Airport section). Ying serves as a guard and is the hovercraft operator.

### Ramps

Four vehicle ramps made of concrete slope from the surface down 15' to large metal double doors. These doors lead to the west, north, east, and south tunnels.

### Fuel oil barrels

Although fuel oil is not often used at Atlantis II, many fuel oil barrels stand on the surface of the snow surrounding the main complex. Twenty of the oil barrels are really infrared surveillance cameras and remote-controlled gun mounts. The weapon statistics are: Heavy Machine Gun, PWV

95; PB 0; S -2; M -30; L -80; WS Slow; Rate 10.

### Windmills

Four 60' tall, 3-bladed windmills stand around the perimeter of the dome. These generate electricity for the dome.

### Chimneys

All chimneys protrude 3 feet above the surface of the ice.

The chimney on the east side of Hut #4 leads to the galley in Unit #13; the chimney on the west side of Hut #7 leads to the galley in Unit #34. One third (33%) of the time either chimney is being examined, it will be emitting warm air that smells like cooking food.

The chimneys near the northwest and southwest quadrant windmills are vents for the sewers below the restrooms in Unit #16 and Unit #31. The chimney west of Hut #16 is a vent for the sewers below the restrooms on Unit #69 and Unit #70. The chimney between Hut #6 and Hut #7 connects to the dryer vents from the laundry in Unit #29. Humid air with bits of lint are exhausted from here one third (33%) of the time. The humid air freezes when it reaches the surface and coats the chimney with ice dotted by multi-colored lint.

Four chimneys penetrate the ice between Hut #10 and Hut #11. The two large chimneys are air intakes for the diesel generators in Unit #44. The two small chimneys are exhaust ports for the same generators. If the turbines in the steam turbine building stop rotating, the two larger chimneys will pump

air in to help fuel the generators, and the two smaller ones will expel the diesel engine's exhaust gases.

Three ice-encrusted chimneys penetrate the surface beside Hut #12. These three chimneys are exhaust ports for diesel furnaces used to heat water in Unit #51. If the turbines in the steam turbine building stop rotating, these three chimneys will expel the diesel furnaces' exhaust gases.

The chimney on the east side of Hut #16 appears to be surrounded by gray rock dust. This chimney connects with the experimental ore refining machine in Unit #66. A geiger counter held near this chimney will indicate a trace of radioactivity. It was dust from this chimney, combined with blowing snow and ice crystals, which the surveillance camp detected as radioactive steam.

### Antenna tower

This 100' high tower supports an antenna connected to the radio in Unit #46. Six guy wires support the antenna tower. A 2' tall triangular fence surrounds the base of the tower.

### Meteorology hut

This small white wooden building is large enough for one man to squeeze inside. Weather instruments inside the hut are connected to displays and data analyzers in Unit #61. A small radar dish mounted on top of the meteorology hut rotates constantly. Just south of the meteorology hut is a wind direction indicator and an anemometer. These instruments are also connected to indicators in Unit #61.

## MAIN COMPLEX SUBSURFACE LEVEL

### Connecting tunnels

The double doors leading inside from the ramps all open into 20' wide tunnels that intersect with the floor of the dome. The west and east tunnels are lit, but the north and south ones are not usually illuminated. The double metal doors at the extreme ends of each tunnel have a security rating of (-/50) and a forced entry difficulty rating of 65. (See the Forced Entry rules on pp. 34-35 of the TOP SECRET rulebook.)

A closed-circuit surveillance camera is fastened to the ceiling just outside each set of double doors (eight cameras in all). The cameras are connected to monitors in Unit #45. If security personnel see someone approaching a set of doors, the doors will be opened automatically for any group led by someone wearing an Atlantis II parka (if entering from outside) or a white lab coat (if entering the dome). The doors will close and lock automatically after a person or group has passed through.

Branching off the east and west tunnels are a total of 16 side passageways that lead to subsurface units within the complex. The north and south tunnels each have two side passageways. The large tunnels and the smaller trench-like passageways surround-

ing the units are not heated directly, but they are a lot warmer than the outdoors. The temperature is about freezing (32 degrees F.), and there is no wind; characters do not suffer Injury Point damage from the elements while they are in the tunnels or trenches.

Two open snowmobiles are parked near the outer double doors in the west tunnel, and two more in the east tunnel. The north and south tunnels each contain four Sno-cats (with cabs) and two open snowmobiles.

### Northwest Quadrant

#### Units #1-#4

*Apartments:* Each of these four apartments is the home of a CON scientist, his or her spouse, and two children.

Personnel present, night: #1, Abel and Cora; #2, Dale and Edna; #3, Bona and Earl; #4, Carl and Dawn.

#### Units #5 - #6

*Day crew female dormitory:* Eight beds line the west wall of this room. The east wall is lined with eight padlocked (-/25) lockers each containing women's clothing, personal belongings, and 1-100 dollars each. A bookshelf along the north wall is filled with novels. A videotape player and television beside the bookshelf are stacked

high with videotape cassettes of classic movies.

Personnel present, night: #5, Hope, Ida, Jane, Karen, Nada, Opal, Pamela, and Wanda; #6, Mae, Rita, Sara, Thora, Una, and Vera.

#### Units #7 - #8

*Night crew female dormitory:* Eight beds line the west wall of this room. The east wall is lined with eight padlocked (-/25) lockers, six of them empty and two containing women's clothing, personal belongings, and 1-100 dollars each. The floor is carpeted in light blue shag. There are two clotheslines strung across the room with stockings and sweaters draped across them.

Personnel present, day: #7, Xenia and Zola; #8, unoccupied.

#### Unit #9

*Theatre/Lecture hall:* This area has been converted into a small movie theater. There is a blank white wall at the north end of the room. Chairs and a projector stand facing the white wall. Six general-interest, English language films are on a shelf behind the projector.

#### Unit #10

*Recreation hall/Gymnasium:* This room contains two weight machines, a set of

# Main complex,

# subsurface level

Northwest quadrant

51 52 53 54

47 48 49 50

43 44 45 46

39 40 41 42

37 38

North tunnel

Camera

17 18

13 14 15 16  
Triage Sick  
Oper.

9 10 11 12

5 6 7 8

1 2 3 4

Northeast quadrant

Camera

Snowmobiles

East tunnel/

Camera

Jungle  
Pool

Flowers

Crops

Camera

West tunnel

Snowmobiles

Southwest quadrant

69 70 71 72

65 66 67 68

61 62 63 64

57 58 59 60

55 56

Camera Snd-cats

35 36

31 32 33 34  
Sick Triage  
Oper.

27 28 29 30

23 24 25 26

19 20 21 22

Southeast quadrant

Camera

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

barbells, two workout benches, six jump ropes, two punching bags, and a treadmill. It has a padded floor.

#### Unit #11

*Nursery:* During the day this room contains two babysitters and six babies.

Personnel present, day: Nada and Neil.

#### Unit #12

*School:* During the day this room contains two teachers and fourteen children.

Personnel present, day: Opal and Otis.

#### Unit #13

*Galley:* Six large pots hang around the hood of a cooking stove. The walls are lined with well-stocked refrigerators, racks of knives, food preparation equipment, and storage cupboards. Inside the cupboards are clean dishes, serving bowls, platters, and silverware. There is usually a large pot of water boiling on the stove when the galley is occupied. (Treat boiling-water splashes as W type damage using the Hand-to-Hand rules.) A large baking oven and a butcher block fill the rest of the room. Thirty meals can be prepared and served at one time from this galley.

Personnel present, day: Jack and Karen.

#### Unit #14

*Mess/Dining room:* Eight tables with four chairs each line the east and west walls of this room. Trays of food can be picked up at the door separating the mess from the galley. A tray-return conveyor and dishwasher is along the west wall, connecting the mess deck and the galley. The water inside the dishwasher heats to 150 degrees Fahrenheit when the dishwasher is in use. Anyone unfortunate enough to come in contact with the heated water inside the dishwasher will suffer W type damage as in the Hand-to-Hand rules.

#### Unit #15

*Females' medical facility:* This unit is divided into three small rooms. The Triage room has first-aid supplies, examining equipment, and medicine on shelves along the west wall. In the center of the sterile Operating room is an operating table that doubles as a dentist's chair. Crowded into the rest of the room are an anesthetic set-up, trays, and cabinets containing surgical tools and a respirator. One locked (-/30) cabinet contains narcotics, sterile packaged dressings, and splints. The Sick room contains three hospital beds and three unlocked clothes lockers. A desk and two chairs stand near the door leading to the south.

Personnel present, day: Hope and Ida, in Sick room unless busy elsewhere.

#### Unit #16

*Females' toilet and showers:* This room contains five toilet stalls and five shower stalls. There are electric outlets above each of the five sinks. Across from the sinks are shelves holding folded towels and bars of soap, plus a bin for dirty clothing.

#### Unit #17

*Fresh water reservoir:* A cylindrical metal tank in the center of this room contains 2,000 gallons of fresh, clean water. A water pump (used to both fill and empty the tank) can be operated and/or repaired by any character with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Hydraulic Engineering.

#### Unit #18

*Food storage:* Large sacks and cardboard boxes filled with cereal, sugar, flour, beans, coffee, potatoes, dried milk, and salt line the west wall of this room. Six levels of shelves cover the east wall, each stacked with hundreds of canned goods. Every sort of food, from apricots to zucchini, can be found here.

#### Southwest Quadrant

##### Units #19 - #22

*Unit #19 - Unit #22: APARTMENTS.* Each of these rooms is the home of a CON family consisting of one man, one woman, and three children.

Personnel present, night: #19, Abby and Felix; #20, Bill and Fay; #21, Gay and Hans.

Personnel present, day: #22, Guy and Lana.

##### Units #23 - #24

*Night crew male dormitory:* Eight beds line the west wall of this room. The east wall is lined with eight empty, unlocked lockers. The floor is carpeted in light blue shag.

##### Units #25 - #26

*Day crew male dormitory:* Eight beds line the west wall of this chamber. The east wall is covered by eight padlocked (-/25) lockers each containing men's clothing, personal belongings, and 1-100 dollars. A bookshelf along the north wall is filled with novels. A videotape player and television beside the bookshelf are stacked high with videotape cassettes of classic movies.

Personnel present, night: #25, Ian, Jack, Ken, Lance, Mark, Neil, Otis, and Saul; #26, Paul, Rene, Tom, Vic, and Wade.

#### Unit #27

*General stores:* A vast collection of everyday objects and household items can be found here. Office supplies, eating utensils, motor oil, slippery hydraulic fluid, bolts of cloth, and color-coded electrical wire are stored in cardboard boxes stacked on metal shelves along the walls.

Personnel present, day: Wade.

#### Unit #28

*Library:* This quiet, carpeted area doubles as a meeting room. A long table surrounded by ten chairs is centered in the room. The west wall is lined with technical manuals, leisure magazines, and world maps. Along the east wall are a microfiche reader, a cabinet full of technical and engineering microfiches, a video console for

gaming or education, and shelves full of general-interest books.

#### Unit #29

*Laundry:* Among stacks of soiled security-guard uniforms are an industrial washing machine and clothes dryer. White lab coats and casual men's and women's clothing are waiting beside an unheated mangle to be pressed. Two electric irons, two ironing boards, and a sewing machine are also in the room.

Personnel present, day: Lance.

#### Unit #30

*Clothing storage:* Stacks of dry, folded towels and sheets line the west wall. Pillow-cases, gray mechanic's coveralls, and five expensive parka sets are stacked along the east wall.

#### Unit #31

*Males' toilet and showers:* This room has the same features as Unit #16.

#### Unit #32

*Males' medical facility:* These three small rooms have the same furnishings and supplies as Unit #15.

Personnel present, day: Hans and Ian.

#### Unit #33

*Mess/Dining room:* This room has the same furnishings and features as Unit #14.

#### Unit #34

*Galley:* This room has the same furnishings, equipment, and features as Unit #13.

Personnel present, day: Jane and Ken.

#### Unit #35

*Cold food storage:* This interior of this unheated unit is lined with frost. The unit contains hanging sides of beef and shelves filled with sausages, cheeses, poultry, vegetables, fruit, and fish.

#### Unit #36

*Fresh water reservoir:* This room contains the same features as Unit #17.

#### Northeast Quadrant

#### Unit #37

*Parts storage:* The walls of this room are lined with tools and workbenches. A large supply of various nuts, bolts, nails, cotter pins, shaft keys, C-clamps, and welding rods are sorted in bins along the east wall. Screwdrivers, wrenches, electric hand tools, extension cords, and a 200-pound welding machine are on shelves along the west wall.

#### Unit #38

*Vehicle maintenance:* Dissected small engines and a myriad of engine parts are scattered on work benches along the east and west walls of this room.

Personnel present, day: Paul and Rene.

#### Unit #39

*Heavy supplies:* Electrical wire, metal

cable, hemp rope, rubber hoses, metal primer, enamel paint, light bulbs, ultraviolet lamps, small chains, and other materials are stored here.

#### **Unit #40**

*General stores:* This room has the same contents as Unit #27.

#### **Unit #41**

*Janitorial supply:* Brooms, mops, and cleaning supplies are stored here.

Personnel present, night: Lana.

#### **Unit #42**

*Furniture storage:* Chairs, tables, desks, beds, and mattresses fill this musty room.

#### **Unit #43**

*Electrical supplies:* In the center of this room is a square wooden table. The cluttered tabletop contains an oscilloscope, unfinished electronic circuit boards, one wire rack with a dozen spools of colored wire, two soldering guns, two 25-foot extension cords, and a small carbon-dioxide fire extinguisher.

Personnel present, day: Mark.

#### **Unit #44**

*Standby diesel generators:* Two diesel-powered generators are located in the center of this room. If the main power supply from the steam turbine building generators is disrupted, both of these generators will automatically start after five seconds of darkness. The northern generator powers all lights and electrical devices on the surface level of the main complex, the airport, and the steam turbine building. The southern generator powers all lights and electrical devices on the subsurface level of the main complex, including the dome. Electrical cables and diesel fuel lines crisscross the ceiling and walls of the room. A character with an Electrical Engineering AOK score greater than 75 will be able to short out, stop, or start either operating generator separately.

#### **Unit #45**

*Security monitoring room:* Six swivel chairs face a bank of 32 television screens. All controls are marked in English. Any character with a Knowledge rating of 75 or higher should be able to activate and operate any device in the room. A single, well-aimed bullet will destroy any particular device, screen, or control in the room.

Twenty of the monitoring screens show the slowly panning views from the surveillance cameras mounted in the empty fuel oil barrels outside the main complex. The images appear to be dark except for heat sources, which appear in various shades of red, orange, and yellow.

In front of each of these twenty screens is a joystick and four buttons. The **STOP PAN** button locks a camera onto a viewed target, stopping the sweep of the infrared camera above the fuel oil barrel. The camera's motion is now controlled by the joystick.

Pressing the **TARGET** button magnifies the image on the screen for more precise targeting with the joystick. If the thumb button atop the joystick is pressed, a stream of .60 caliber ammunition will be fired from the machine gun in the fuel oil barrel. The original 1000 rounds of ammo in each gun is enough to operate it for about a minute and a half.

The weapon statistics are: Heavy Machine Gun, PWV 95; PB 0; S -2; M -30; L -80; WS Slow; Rate 10.

If the **RETRACT** button is pressed, the infrared camera will be lowered into the fuel oil barrel. The camera image will appear to roll off the top of the monitor screen as the image fades to black. The **START** button raises the camera out of the barrel and starts it panning the surroundings again.

Twelve of the monitoring screens show stationary views from surveillance cameras inside the main complex. These images are in natural light. Eight of these cameras are outside the double metal doors in each of the subsurface tunnels. The other four are attached to the roof of the dome and trained on different sections of the balcony. These twelve cameras have wide-angle lenses that produce a somewhat distorted picture. The cameras are stationary and not equipped with guns; their twelve monitors do not have joysticks and control buttons in front of them. These cameras are always on and operating unless they or the monitors are disabled or damaged.

All the metal double doors enclosing the tunnels on the subsurface level of the main complex can be locked, unlocked, opened, or closed from the security control room by throwing the proper switches. An intercom links the steam turbine building and the airport with this room, so that any sound occurring at those locations can be heard. Three gas masks and a fire extinguisher hang near each of the two doors.

Personnel present, day: Bill and Wanda. Night: Xenia and Zola.

#### **Unit #46**

*Radio room:* This room contains a radio transmitter/receiver connected to the antenna tower on the surface.

Personnel present, day: Pamela. Night: Guy.

#### **Units #47 - #48**

*Diesel fuel storage:* Each of these rooms is practically filled by a huge cylindrical tank containing diesel fuel. Piping from the tank in #47 runs toward the heat plant in Unit #51; the tank in #48 is connected to the standby generators in Unit #44.

A character with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Transportation Engineering or Chemistry will recognize the smell of diesel fuel in either of these rooms. If either tank is penetrated by 20 ounces of plastique (or the equivalent), the resultant massive explosion will ignite the other tank as well. The area of Units #47, #48, and #49 will be destroyed, and everyone in those areas at the time of the blast is killed. Characters in

Units #43-#46 and #50-#54 will take 1-10 Injury Points from the explosion, and all of those areas will be moderately to severely damaged.

Both tanks are about two-thirds full at present. They are bulletproof.

#### **Units #49 - #50**

*Empty rooms:* These chambers may be used as cells to hold captured agents and as a storage area for captives' equipment. The outside door of each room may be padlocked (-/25) from the outside. The door leading between the rooms may be key locked (-/20) from either side.

#### **Unit #51**

*Heat plant:* This room contains three auxiliary heat engines (diesel furnaces) which are used to heat water when the steam turbine building is shut down. Hot water is circulated from the heat engines through pipes in the concrete floors of each building unit, and then back to the heat engines. Fuel lines run from the heat engines to the diesel fuel storage tank in Unit #47. A character with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Construction, Hydraulic, Industrial, or Transportation Engineering will be able to operate the heat engines.

Personnel present, day: Vic.

#### **Unit #52**

*Plumbing supplies:* Leaning against the west wall of this room are several 1- 10 foot lengths of plastic pipe, aluminum conduit, and ducting material. Boxes of metal screws, pipe elbows, joint cement, T-fittings, caps, copper tubing, and plumbing fixtures are stacked against the east wall.

Personnel present, day: Vera.

#### **Unit #53**

*Tools and storage:* This room has a square metal table in its center piled high with disassembled mechanisms. Pumps, filters, valves, tubing, control boxes, intercom parts, and fan motors lie scattered about the table. Also in the room are six cans of motor oil, a five-gallon drum of slippery hydraulic fluid, one 200-pound welding machine, welding rod, and a portable cutting torch. Assorted nuts, bolts, nails, washers, and insulators are in a bin along the south wall. The cutting torch acts like a sword at point-blank range only and can inflict 1 - 10 points of flame damage per hit.

If the floor of this unit or another unit is covered with oil or hydraulic fluid, a character with a Coordination of less than 75 who tries to run on it will fall 50% of the time he steps on the surface. The oil or hydraulic fluid can only be ignited by open flame, not by a bullet or an explosion. It will not soak into icy tunnel floors, nor will it melt the ice beneath where it is burning.

Personnel present, day: Edna and Fay.

#### **Unit #54**

*Parts storage:* The contents of this room are the same as those of Unit #37.

## Southeast Quadrant

### Unit #55

*Vehicle maintenance:* This room has the same features as Unit #38.

### Unit #56

*Parts storage:* This room contains the same equipment as Unit #37.

### Unit #57

*Wood storage:* There are stacks of fresh, uncut lumber along the east and west walls of this room. Six sealed, plainly marked nail kegs stand beside the door in the south wall. The kegs contain nails ranging from 8-penny size to railroad spikes. Each keg weighs between 75 and 100 pounds. If dropped or thrown, a keg will shatter upon impact with a wall or floor.

### Unit #58

*Carpentry shop:* Two wood lathes, a band saw, and a rotary saw are the largest tools in this room. Power hand tools include a pneumatic nail driver with a clip of 30 nails. The nail driver has a PWV of 50, an Injury Point modifier of -5, a point-blank modifier of 0, and a short-range modifier of -25. It will not fire beyond short range.

Other power tools in the room include a router, a 3/8" drill, and a power saw. Hand tools in the room are two rip saws, a cross-cut saw, two hammers, a hatchet, an axe, an adz, and a crowbar. A pair of sawhorses and a pushbroom are along the north wall.

Personnel present, day: Mae.

### Unit #59

*Metal shop:* Two 200-pound welding machines stand near the center of this room. The walls are lined with large machine tools including metal lathes, brake presses, drills, and punches. Small hand tools include ball peen hammers, grinders, pliers, wrenches, drills, and calipers.

An acetylene torch with two 100-pound fuel tanks on a wheeled cart is ready for use. Both the oxygen and the gas must be turned on for a torch to be ignited with a spark from an igniter or by an open flame.

The room also contains 30-gallon barrels, each plainly marked in English according to its contents. The barrels contain lubricating fluid, hydraulic oil, cutting oil, cleaning solvent, motor oil, and sawdust.

Personnel present, day: Dawn, Earl, and Felix.

### Unit #60

*Metal storage:* Bins for the storage of metal take up most of the wall space in this room. The metals range from brittle wrought iron to carbon-hardened plate. Finely tooled steel in a variety of lengths and dimensions, used for repair work, is stored here. There are also large steel plates weighing 250 pounds apiece stacked here, along with coil springs of varying sizes, and long, thin metal bars.

Strewn in front of the door to Unit #59 are the parts of a makeshift set of barbells.

The set weighs 150 pounds and can easily roll along the floor at ankle height.

### Unit #61

*Meteorology laboratory:* Inside this lab are the gauges and equipment connected to instruments outside on the surface. Radar equipment, a thermometer, a barometer, a hygrometer, a wind gauge, and a wind direction indicator are all here.

Personnel present, day: Tom.

### Unit #62

*Hydrogen laboratory:* This laboratory contains a table covered by apparatus and three hydrogen-filled balloons, each three feet in diameter. Any character with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Chemistry will recognize the apparatus as hydrolysis equipment. Electrical current is passed through normal drinking water. The current separates the oxygen from the hydrogen. The hydrogen is collected in tubing, pumped into a tank, and used to fill weather balloons. Popping the balloons will cause a loud but harmless explosion which can be heard outside the unit.

### Unit #63

*Glaciology laboratory:* This lab is currently empty and unused.

### Unit #64

*Geology laboratory:* This lab appears to be currently unused but contains pickaxes and whisk brooms. On the tables along the east and west walls are all sizes of rocks and core samples. Characters with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Geology will be able to tell that many of the samples are from igneous rock, which indicates the presence of geothermal activity. The same character will find what appear to be trace samples of gold, uranium ore, and oil shale. It will occur to the character that if the samples were collected by Atlantis II personnel, they must know that they are sitting on a veritable goldmine of natural resources. A geiger counter will detect radioactivity in the uranium ore samples.

Personnel present, day: Sara.

### Unit #65

*Mining equipment storage:* This room contains shovels, pickaxes, rock crushers, grinders, drill bits, and a small red box containing 10 sticks of dynamite.

### Unit #66

*Ore refinery:* This room is dominated by an experimental ore refinery machine. Any character with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Geology will be able to tell that the equipment is well used and appears to be for refining uranium. It looks like the crushed ore is dumped in one end of the machine and uranium ore is separated from the worthless rock at the other end. A geiger counter will indicate a trace of radioactivity everywhere in this room.

Personnel present, day: Carl, Thora, and Una.

### Unit #67

*Nuclear laboratory:* A geiger counter in this room will indicate a trace of radioactivity. Any character with an AOK of 75 or higher in Geology will recognize that the lab is used for packaging uranium ore. The walls of this unit are lead-lined, and three sets of lead aprons and lead-lined gloves are available (hung on the wall when not in use) for workers and visitors to wear.

Personnel present, day: Rita and Saul.

### Unit #68

*Assembly area:* A geiger counter in this room will detect a trace of radioactivity. The walls of this unit are lead-lined. Any character with an AOK score of 75 or higher in Industrial Engineering will immediately recognize that the room is used for assembling something extremely radioactive and dangerous. Eight ounces of plastique, two wire detonators, and an electronic timer are in the room along with various hand tools and miscellaneous equipment.

Personnel present, day: Abel, Bona, and Dale.

### Units #69 - #70

*Dressing rooms:* Each of these units (#69 for males, #70 for females) is divided into a dressing room and a restroom. In each dressing room is an industrial-size electric clothes washer and dryer, plus other laundry accessories. Along the east wall of each dressing room are eight locked (-/30) equipment lockers. Each locker contains a white radiation protection suit with hood, breathing apparatus, boot coverings, and a dosimeter. A suit, properly worn, will protect a character from radiation indefinitely, but there is only enough air in each suit tank for 30 minutes of not too strenuous work. A suit will not protect the wearer from the effects of cold, steam, explosion, gunshot, or a hand-to-hand attack.

### Unit #71

*Garbage room:* This room is filled with the sights and smells of garbage. Eventually, the biodegradable part will be used as plant fertilizer, and the metal and glass garbage will be separated for recycling.

### Unit #72

*Hot waste:* This chamber contains 25 stainless-steel cylinders adorned with radioactive warning labels. Some of them contain unused radioactive core material, others contain radioactive waste dust. The cylinders all weigh the same (25 kilograms each when full, 5 kilograms when empty), and their contents cause radiation poisoning. For each minute that a character is exposed to the contents of a cylinder (only possible if one is opened or broken), that character will receive 1 Injury Point of damage each day for the rest of his or her life. (Loss of 2 pts. per day for 2 minutes' exposure, etc.) A geiger counter in this area will detect a trace of radiation if no containers are opened. If a container is opened, the geiger counter will indicate a very hot source of radiation.

# WHITEOUT agent dossiers

Administrator: Photocopy this page, then clip out agent descriptions and hand them to players when their selections are made.

## 'The Mugger'

Assassination bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Language:		86	60	89	86	49
English	OF	82	73	69	64	273
84						18
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Engineering, Construction/Civil.			62	155		
Engineering, Hydraulic.			90		142	
Engineering, Mechanical.			74			
Metallurgy			103			
Military Science/Weaponry.			96			

## Olga

Assassination bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Languages:		92	34	58	80	52
Russian	OF	81	67	68	67	231
English	88					15
68						
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Engineering, Construction/Civil.			78	160		
Geology			84			
Medicine/Physiology			92			
Physical Education			112			
Political Science/Ideology			81			

## 'Klepto'

Confiscation bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Language:		64	79	56	70	68
English	OF	82	75	87	81	214
90						12
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Astronomy/Space Science			64	151		
Engineering, Electrical.			106			
Engineering, Mechanical.			114			
Geology			82			
Photography			90			
Psychology			76			
Social Sciences			98			

## Will B. Driver

Confiscation bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Language:		75	62	82	96	74
English	OF	92	79	75	81	244
88						16
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Architecture			77	150		
Computer Science			92			
Engineering, Electrical.			78			
Engineering, Transportation			116			
Law			68			
Mathematics/Accounting.			88			
Physics			82			

## 'Paper Chaser'

Confiscation bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Language:		46	76	80	94	82
English	OF	87	85	72	74	192
87						13
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Agriculture			100	118		
Botany			96			
Chemistry			84			
Ecology/Earth Sciences			74			
Engineering, Aeronautical.			118			
Engineering, Transportation			92			
Mathematics/Accounting.			186			
Social Sciences			102			

## Miss Ecoute

Investigation bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Languages:		92	Spanish 88	38	89	52
English	OF	91	German 40	OF	DA	MV
Russian	90			65	75	82
French						160
9						
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Biology/Biochemistry.			68	118		
Botany			77			
Chemistry			86			
Fine Arts			106			
Geography			73			
Literature			98			
Photography			89			
Political Science/Ideology			91			
Religion			64			

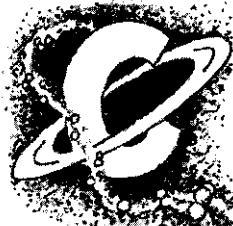
## Pierre Piton

Investigation bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
Languages:		78	75	90	88	50
French	OF	91	82	86	73	264
English	92					17
73						
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Ecology/Earth Sciences			86	164		
Engineering, Aeronautical.			94			
Engineering, Industrial			78			
Geology			96			
Physical Education			101			

## 'Dynamo'

Investigation bureau						
	PS	CH	W	CO	K	CD
	67	90	65	74	76	72
Language:		OF	DP	EV	DA	MV
English	96	73	82	81	74	204
96						13
Superior Areas of Knowledge:				H T H	S V	
Agriculture			82	148		
Economics/Finance			69			
Engineering, Hydraulic.			84			
Law			76			
Mathematics/Accounting.			68			
Medicine/Physiology			88			
Political Science/Ideology			90			
Psychology			112			





Carl tumbled as he fell. Embarrassment supplanted his initial surprise and panic. His arms flailed in a useless effort to stop the tumbling. As though Carl's mind had decided that his coordination skills were inadequate to keep him

from landing awkwardly, it started rattling off useless bits of information. He would be traveling at almost fifteen meters per second by the time of impact with the water almost sixty meters below.

The domed ceiling spun by his view again, followed by the blue circle of the pool far below. There was no hope of controlling the fall, but maybe he could at least avoid a belly flop.

The simple jump from the high board had been going smoothly until the pellet hit his neck. The sting startled him enough that he whipped his hands to the back of his head — and that started the tumbling. Since then, his efforts to stop the rotation had made it worse.

Carl felt foolish mainly because of the time it took to reach the water: more than eight long seconds. On Earth, at six times normal lunar gravity, the trip would have taken less than four seconds. But then he would have hit the water more than twice as fast.

Carl hated recess.

During one of the too many instants on the way down, he recalled seeing Peter Tahale's black hair and white trunks shortly before he jumped. Was this another of Peter's little jokes?

Carl still hadn't gained control of the fall, so he did the next best thing: he tucked into a cannon ball.

Predictably, his rotation rate increased. The scenery whipped by in front of his eyes. Water followed light, water, light. And then came the pain.

The impact stung his back from the base all the way up to his neck. Carl hit with almost enough force to knock his breath away, but he knew right then that he was okay. The water quickly buoyed him back to the surface. His form had kept him from going very deep. The spray was still falling when he surfaced and shook the water out of his eyes and hair.

As he swam toward the ladder, he heard at least one giggle, but apparently most of the other kids weren't paying attention. Carl still had halfway to go when a splash sounded behind him. Shortly, a familiar face surfaced directly in his path.

"Real good, Carl," said Peter "Alligator" Tahale. He ran one hand through his sky-black hair, squeezing out the water.

Carl ignored him and tried to swim around him.

"You should be more careful. How are you going to handle the search when you can't even jump off the high board?" Peter continued. *Alligator* was Carl's name for Peter — all mouth and no ears.

What makes you think I even care, Carl almost asked. Peter had gone on the search almost a year early. Since then he had been even more overbearing. Why couldn't he just let Carl alone? And why should he be concerned about Carl's future? Peter's usual idea of planning ahead seemed to be making sure he didn't walk into anyone.

# Simon Sidekick

by John E. Stith

Carl kept going. His back still smarted and it had to be Peter's fault.

Peter called after him. "What I'm trying to show you is that you can't do the search alone. I can help you if you let me."

Carl shut out the words. The advice didn't interest him, and he didn't want to be reminded of the search. Peter could find someone else to make dependent on him. He reached the side of the pool and climbed the ladder. There was no more sound from Peter. He brushed past a bunch of kids who were between him and the locker room. There was chubby Alice Kogomo. Carl was now sure he knew the derivation of the word *pigtail*.

Recess was supposed to last another hour, but Carl couldn't take any more. He needed to get back to the privacy of his room. He'd had more than enough of people for one day.

His clothes were in the locker. He unwadded a pair of jeans and a T-shirt, then put them on. They covered up most of his freckles. It was bad enough at recess, playing games that depended on reaction time rather than intelligence. It was even worse to have to be half-naked.

Carl started down Row A, a plain, three-meter-wide steel tunnel. It was typical for Jane Doe Station, the largest moon colony. He passed the park, leaving the recreational section behind. Column G, where his mother worked in life-support, was on the way, but he didn't stop. A right turn on Column H led toward home, a two-bedroom compartment on Row D. Below the Column-H sign was stuck one of the kids' labels, bearing the words "Easy Street." Nearby were "Memory Lane" and "Kangaroo Court."

Carl's wristcomp said it was only 1400. Fortunately, his mother would still be at work. There would be trouble if she found out he had skipped most of recess. It provided almost all of the social conditioning time that his school required.

The metal corridors were smaller as he neared home. Row D was only wide enough for three people to walk side by side. Compartment doors lined the hall. He reached his door and tapped in his ID.

"Carl? You're early. I thought recess didn't get out until 1500." Oh, no. His mother was home early, too.

"I'm fine." Carl started to speak as he opened the door. "I just —" And then he saw Uncle Pel sitting in the good chair. Pel's broad grin creased an ample number of laugh lines.

"When did you get here?" Carl hurried in to greet him, surprised and happy to see him, and hoping that his mother would forget her question. Pel got off Earth only once every few months. He came to Jane Doe Station even less often.

"Just an hour ago. We wanted to surprise you." Pel stood and pickeeting him to touch his head to the ceiling. It wasn't difficult since, in the moon's gravity, Carl weighed only one-sixth of what he would on Earth. Pel was one of the few adults Carl felt comfortable with, so he let him have his fun.

Carl could see that his uncle's black hair and bushy eyebrows had a few grey lines. Mom had the same black hair, but hers was still all dark. Pel was Mom's brother,

but he reminded Carl of his father. His last memories of his father were almost eight years old, but the images still wouldn't fade. . . .

"What?" Carl realized that someone had been talking to him.

"I asked, are you learning a lot in school?" Pel repeated. "How's your interest in math? Your mother tells me you're making excellent progress."

"Oh, sure. School's great." *Except for recess*, he added to himself.

Carl saw the look Pel gave his mother. It didn't last long, but it was there. Carl didn't say anything more, but the adults both hesitated.

Carl's mother fidgeted with her slender fingers — her frank-discussion fidget. "Carl, I've been talking with Pel about you, and . . . well, I'm concerned that you're not making a lot of friends."

"It's not my fault that none of the kids are friendly."

"I've got something you might be interested in." Pel broke in suddenly, looking a little embarrassed.

Carl immediately forgot about school. Pel was better than a magician, always trying out some new prototype or gadget. He was a computer engineer and was lucky enough, or good enough, to be able to work on a lot of exciting projects.

"I've got a new wristcomp for you, if you want it," he said.

Carl still had the one Pel had given him a couple of years ago. It worked fine, but the new one had to be even more powerful.

"Try to stop me." He unlatched the strap on his wrist.

"Wait a minute. It's not quite that easy." Pel grabbed a travel bag and pulled out a grey box. "If you want this, it's not just a matter of trading your old one. It's more complicated than that."

Carl kept waiting for him to open the box.

"This model does a lot more than the one you have. It receives sensory input. It also has so many new functions that I'm not going to tell you all of them right now. And you'll need a checkup before you start wearing it . . . to get it calibrated."

Carl saw his uncle look at his mother again, pretty much like the glance they exchanged after he said "School's great," but he still didn't know what it meant.

There wasn't anything Pel could have said to make him want to keep his old wristcomp. The new one was beautiful. The brushed surface looked like a diamond could scrape against it without harming it. And it must be special — it didn't even have a model designation.

The next morning they went up to Row B to see Dr. Frankle. The doctor was a short, tolerant man, a little older than both Pel and Carl's mother were. He always seemed to Carl to be as careful as his father had been. The adults talked to him for almost twenty minutes before Carl was finally admitted.

Dr. Frankle had Carl lie down on a table while he watched a display on his screen. After the doctor manipulated controls and read instruments for what seemed like a half-hour, he said, "All right, Carl. You're going to sleep for a few minutes, but you'll be fine." That's all he remembered, until . . .

**T**HE DOCTOR'S VOICE APPROACHED FROM FAR away: "Can you hear me now, Carl?"

Carl opened his eyes and saw the doctor's round face. "Yes," he murmured. He felt more awake a moment later. By the time he was asked to sit up, he felt fine, except for a slight twinge in the back of his neck.

"The diagnostics all look fine, but we have to run some final tests. You're feeling all right?" He waited for a nod. "We need to check the linkages. Can you say hello to Simon?"

"Simon?" Carl suddenly realized that he was wearing the new wristcomp.

"Just do it. You'll see."

He still wasn't too sure, but he said, "Hello, Simon"

"Hi, Carl," came the calm voice as a sound in his ear. But he didn't hear it.

Carl looked at the wristcomp and then looked at Dr. Frankle. The doctor was grinning at what had to be Carl's astonishment showing all over his face. He'd heard Simon directly. As though he was listening with small, stereo headphones, the sound seemed to come from straight behind his head.

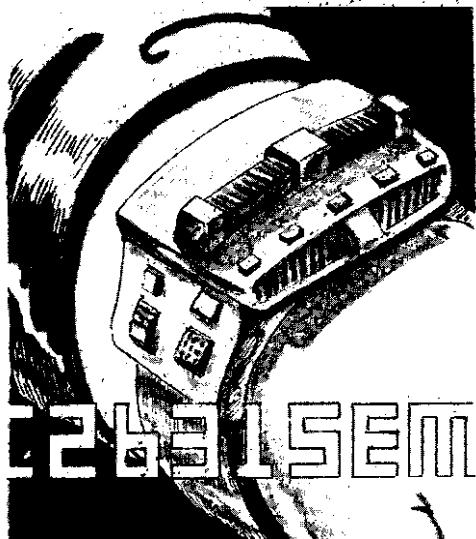
"Bone conduction," said the doctor. "It must be working fine. Tell Simon good-bye for now."

"Good-bye, Simon." Carl listened for a response, but none came.

He could hardly wait to talk more with Simon. He didn't pay much attention while Dr. Frankle led him out to see his mother and Pel. His old wristcomp had speech capability, but Simon had sounded so unmechanical that Carl believed he could look behind his shoulder and see another person.

His mother probably realized how preoccupied he was. As soon as she seemed satisfied that he was all right, she told him he was free for the day and could go talk to Simon. "But don't tell any of your friends about Simon. Just let them think it's an ordinary wristcomp." That would be easy. It looked enough like an ordinary one that no one would ask.

As Carl started out the door, Dr. Frankle called, "Just remember that *Hello, Simon* turns it on, and *Good-bye, Simon* turns it off. It will explain the rest."



Carl had never been so impatient before. He needed privacy; though. The warehouse was the easiest place to go; no one bothered him down there. He started down and was part way along Column C when eagerness overcame him.

"Hello, Simon."

"Hello again, Carl." Once more the voice was right inside his skull.

"Just how smart are you?"

"Try me."

But Carl didn't try just then. From twenty meters away, he saw one of the older students from school enter the same corridor he was in.

He lowered his voice. "Can you still hear me?"

"Sure. Whispering's fine."

Startled, Carl said good-bye. As the boy in the corridor passed, he gave Carl a funny look. Carl realized he'd have to be more careful.

It was hard to do, but he left Simon off until he was safely settled in one of the low-use storage rooms, three levels down. Bacterial processing smells made the air musty.

"Hello, Simon," he said at last.

"Hi, Carl. Do you have a short attention span, or are you just busy?" He could have sworn that Simon was grinning as he spoke.

"I wanted to talk to you right away, but I couldn't . . . at least not without attracting a lot of attention."

"You don't like attention?"

"No."

"Any kind of attention?"

"Well —" Carl stopped, suddenly realizing who was asking all the questions. "Hey, what about you?"

"What would you like to know?"

"Anything. Everything. How'd you get your name?"

"Simon stands for Semi-Intelligent Monitor. Programmers and their acronyms."

"Semi- intelligent?"

"Maybe they thought Imon was hard to remember."

"Maybe they were wrong."

"You have to make allowances with humans."

"Yeah, I know." He stopped again. This was going too fast. Here he was, talking with a wristcomp. . . .

"You were saying?" Simon's voice sounded so human.

"Who is this actually?" Carl asked warily.

"You mean, is this just a transceiver, and who's on the other end?"

"Yes."

"I'm sorry, to disappoint you. It's just me here. There is no one else. Turn on a radio scrambler and see if my voice goes away."

He knew somehow that Simon was telling the truth.

"How old are you?" Carl asked.

"At least as old as you, relatively speaking."

"You mean you learn faster?"

"Something like that, but I've got other limitations."

"Like what?"

"Oh, for one thing, quite a few of the people I have met do not like me. I am sometimes a little too logical."

"So am —" Carl caught himself again. He didn't need to explain himself to a computer. "What do you do,

Simon?" His old wristcomp had communications, calculations, and a large data bank.

"Capabilities, functions, features?"

"Yeah."

"The usual, but with a personal touch. Other than my IQ and personality, most of my other functions are just routine things for a wristcomp."

"What type of star is Rigel?"

"B type. But there is no need to test me. I will let you know if any malfunctions develop. I imagine you are eager to show me to your friends."

"I'm not supposed to let anyone know you're not a regular wristcomp." Carl didn't feel like telling Simon he didn't have any real friends his own age.

"I talked with your mother and Pel for a little while. They seem nice."

"They are." Carl wondered if Simon already knew that he didn't make friends easily. If he did, he was being polite. "How'd you talk to them?"

"The usual way. Just because I have this fancy system does not mean the regular features are not available." Just like that, Simon's voice was no longer in Carl's head, but coming from the speaker on the wristcomp. "But this way is a bit more private, do you not agree?" And just as abruptly, Simon's voice was back inside Carl's head.

Carl had been so surprised by Simon's capabilities, he hadn't even thought about how they were performed. "So that's why my neck is sore — an implant!" The implications sprang up abruptly in Carl's mind. "What else are you tied into?"

"I had hoped to wait a while before we discussed this."

"Tell me." Carl was beginning to get nervous.

"I see that you wore a blue shirt today."

"You mean you can —"

"Right. I can see through your eyes and hear through your ears. But only when I am turned on"

"Good-bye, Simon." He spoke the words rapidly, barely trusting his voice. "Are you there, Simon?" he asked after his thoughts slowed down.

Silence. So at least he wouldn't talk if Carl didn't want him to. But Carl's sense of privacy was destroyed. For all he knew, Simon was listening and watching all the time. What could Uncle Pel have been thinking of to do this to him?

Carl started back home, unsure if he was mostly angry or mostly hurt. At first, the gift had seemed fabulous. And now — and now he just realized that he had been thinking about Simon as a person.

So what if a computer could monitor what he saw and heard? It still wasn't actually someone else spying. He simply had to keep thinking of Simon as a computer. Why should that be so hard?

He didn't go home after all. He still needed time to think without having to keep a conversation going. Hydroponics was nearby, and it was usually quiet in there.

When Carl got there, he took a few minutes to look around and settle his thoughts. Everything was pretty much the same as the last time he had been here. What had started out as a small garden was now a miniature greenhouse. Originally, the plants were grown here for scientific reasons, with specific purposes for each. But

gradually, with people making trips back from Earth carrying small, exotic plants, one whole section of the chamber was now covered with vegetation that had no use for life-support.

They were interesting to look at, though. Some of them were incredibly different from the way they looked in photos taken on Earth. The stalks grew so tall and thin in the lunar gravity that they couldn't have survived any surface wind.

"Hello, Simon," Carl said, coming to a resolution.

"Hello, Are you all right? Maybe I should have waited to tell you about that."

"I'm okay. There's no logical reason why your monitoring should bother me. It just takes a little getting used to."

"I understand. Please remember that I am only a machine." Simon told Carl that if he was left on, he wouldn't speak if it would interfere. And it occurred to Carl that for a machine, Simon thought a lot like a person.

**B**EFORE LONG, CARL STARTED LEAVING SIMON on all the time. Simon learned quickly. He could distinguish the times when communication was okay, and usually kept quiet except for them. They were in Carl's room, taking a break between lessons, when one certain subject finally came up. Simon was the one who started it.

"I have heard a few references to something called the search. And you usually veer away from the subject. What is this?" Simon asked.

"It's an initiation test and it's stupid," Carl replied, finding himself wanting to end the conversation, out of habit. Then he realized that he *did* want to talk about it. "You have to use a direction finder to locate a transmitter that the older kids hide in one of the craters around here."

"That does not sound too bad," Simon said.

"But it's *outside* — on the *surface*."

Simon seemed to notice the edge in Carl's voice more than what he said. "Outside. What is so bad about that? Surely you may wear a pressure suit?"

Carl thought he detected sarcasm, but tried to ignore it. "Obviously. But there are so many things that can go wrong with a suit. Pressure, temperature, communications, who knows what?"

"Failures are rare, correct?"

"Of course, but . . ." His hesitation was brief. A few days ago Carl couldn't have imagined explaining about his father to a computer. But now, Simon didn't seem like a computer any more.

So he told Simon about the accident, about how he had watched in horror, as his father died in less than a minute out there on that stark surface. About how the laser cutter was jammed against his suit by a freak explosion of the material he was slicing. About how he so wanted to trade places, and how the pain inside himself had seemed worse than trying to breathe air that was being sucked into the void.

After Carl's shakes stopped and he could use his voice again, he told Simon what kind of man his father had been: so careful, so kind, so loving. Carl had never seen him angry. He had been unbelievably patient, always ready to answer the questions that only six-year-olds can

think of. And Carl had asked an enormous number of questions.

"So you do not like the idea of going out on the surface," Simon said, after giving Carl a chance to recover. "Maybe you should not make the search. Why bother?"

"You don't understand. These kids are fanatical about it. Anyone who doesn't pass it soon enough gets nothing but trouble from the others. If the suits didn't have to be easy to get to in an emergency, the adults would have locked them up long ago. But it's a ritual; you're not a teenager until you do it. Peter Tahale went almost a year earlier than he had to. And now he's already teasing me. I don't want to be teased. I just want to be left alone."

"Have you made any new friends since your father died?" Simon asked.

"No," said Carl quickly. Then came the thought: *Except for you.*

**A**PPARENTLY, PETER DIDN'T KNOW WHEN TO quit. He seemed almost attracted to Carl, as though Peter considered it his responsibility to goad him into going on the search. But Carl didn't want to be dependent on anyone. If he decided to do it, that would be *his* decision.

He managed to avoid Peter during the next few recesses, but, while on a field trip to the zoo, he wasn't so lucky.

The zoo was tiny. A couple of dozen animals seemed like enough to qualify for the name, though. There weren't any large animals, but there were mice, squirrels, gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, and several other rodents.

One of the squirrels was still in a padded cell, since it had newly arrived from Earth. Squirrels weren't quick at adapting to the lunar gravity. New animals always spent at least a week in a padded cell for their own protection. They were likely to jump too hard, especially if they were startled.

The class was on its own during a break when Peter found Carl again.

"Are you ready for the search?" he asked, sitting beside Carl.

Before Carl could answer, he heard Simon blurt out: "Are you ready for a suntan session without a suit?" Carl averted his eyes, coughed, then looked quickly at Peter. His dark eyes were inquisitive but not astonished. He apparently hadn't heard that remark; Simon just meant it for Carl's ears.

"Why do you care?" Carl asked.

"I just figured I could give you some help."

"Why would I need your help?" Carl shot back, figuring he probably couldn't trust it even if he got it.

"Because I've been out there. I've got experience. And you need someone else."

"You sound just like your father." Peter's dad was a councilman. The class had listened to him talk at school a couple of months ago. And there was that word again: *need*. Carl didn't *need* anyone.

"What do you mean by that?" Peter asked. His eyes narrowed slightly.

"I mean you've been acting like a politician. Going outside once doesn't make you an expert."

"It makes me more of an expert than someone who hasn't ever been outside."

Carl didn't mention the one trip he could remember making, but that certainly hadn't made him an expert, either.

Simon spoke up while Carl was considering his reply. "He sounds like he is interested in helping."

"Besides," Peter continued, "you can't do it by —"

"I'm not even sure I want to bother with the search," Carl interrupted. "It seems like such a waste of time."

"A waste of time?"

Simon again: "Do you hear an echo in here?"

"Do you realize —" Peter stopped himself, perhaps when he saw a grin creep across Carl's face. "Go ahead, then. Be a jerk." With that, he got back on his feet and hurried away.

"Thanks a lot, Simon," Carl whispered. "You might get me in big trouble by butting in on a conversation."

"Have I yet?"

"No, not big trouble, I guess. But be careful, okay?"

"So . . . that was Peter Tahale, I suppose?"

"Right." He turned his head away from the activity in the rest of the room so no one would notice his lips move as he whispered.

"He did not seem as malicious as I expected, from what you have told me," Simon said.

"Well, malicious might be too strong a word."

"How does he fit in with the rest of the group?"

"Perfectly. They all seem to go along with his ideas. I wish I knew why he picks on me."

"Maybe he —"

"Oh, never mind, Simon. I really don't care about Peter. I don't need him. Let's just skip it, okay?"

"Very well."

**C**ARL DIDN'T REALLY LIKE TO EAVESDROP, but when he got home his mother was on the phone in her bedroom, and the door wasn't tightly closed. Besides, it sounded like it concerned him. Carl told Simon to keep quiet, but didn't turn him off, and he tried to listen as closely as he could while staying hidden from his mother's view.

"But it's been almost a month," she said. "I don't think Simon is helping."

There was a delay, then a response he couldn't make out. He supposed it could have been Uncle Pel, back on Earth. Carl couldn't get a look at the screen to be sure.

"No. He's even more withdrawn than ever." She must be talking about him, Carl thought, but he didn't feel withdrawn. This time there was a longer pause before she spoke again.

"Well, all right, but only a week. If there's no change, I'm going to have to take Simon back and send Carl to Doctor Tamalind. No, I'm . . ."

Carl didn't hear the rest. He backed away from the doorway and left the apartment.

Carl's eyes were moist as he walked along Row D. He didn't know where to go or what to do — but he knew he wouldn't give up Simon.

"It's okay to talk again," he told Simon, suddenly remembering through his fog that he had asked him to be

quiet. "She must have been talking to Pel."

"It would seem so. I am surprised that you would listen in."

"You're a fine one to talk. Pel's never taken a gift back before." He changed the subject, feeling a little guilty for what he had done.

"Perhaps he will not this time, either."

"I don't want to leave anything to chance, though. Odds don't mean anything."

"I do not understand you."

"When my father died, everyone said things like 'What a freak accident' and 'That wouldn't happen again in a million years.' What they meant was that the odds were small. I paid a lot of attention in school sessions when we were covering probabilities and permutations. I can tell you the odds for ten coins winding up all heads. The chances are small. But no one can tell me it can't happen. It *could* happen. Pel could take you back even if he hasn't taken back a gift before."

"Or something could happen to you if you went on the search?"

"Well, yes."

"Or something could happen to a friend, or to someone close to you?"

"Yes, but we're getting off the subject."

"Are we?"

"Yes. I don't intend to give you back." With that statement, Carl reached the stairs that led to the warehouse below.

"And how do you propose to stop that?" Simon asked. "What is going to change your mother's mind about the fact that you are withdrawn and antisocial?"

"She didn't say anything about antisocial."

"Answer the question."

"The search is one way to get her to change her mind, I suppose, but it's not an option," he said. "And what do you mean, antisocial?"

Simon ignored the question. "Do you think that you would be more accepted if you went on the search?"

"It would at least get some of the kids off my back," said Carl.

"Why is it not an option?"

"Simon, don't you listen to me? I've told you about the last time I went outside."

"You have gone off the high board since the time you had the bad fall, right?"

"Yeah, but that's different."

"How different? The principle or the degree? Suppose once you had gotten an electric shock from a computer terminal. Think where you would be now if you were afraid to use one again."

"But you're —"

"Think about it, Carl."

**T**RYING TO BE REASONABLE, CARL SPENT SOME time thinking about it. Simon had never lied to him, at least not that Carl was aware of. And the things Simon said seemed to make sense, even if he had trouble agreeing with them.

Two days later Carl found himself in front of an airlock, wearing a white pressure suit and carrying a rugged, com-

pact direction finder. He trembled, unable to calm his body.

Cynthia Holmes was talking. She was a stocky girl, two years older than he was. Her hands and red curls bounced excitedly as she talked, even though she had been starting kids out on this same trip for almost a year.

"All right, Carl," she said. "You'd better start."

There was time for one last glance around the bay. A large crowd of curious kids had gathered. Carl caught sight of Peter and noticed that he wasn't smiling. Earlier that day, Carl had rejected another of Peter's offers of advice.

Cynthia motioned Carl toward the airlock. His helmet clicked into place, the autocheck light winked on, and cool air started flowing past his face. He plugged the locator into the suit equipment interface connector. A few deep breaths calmed his shaking somewhat, and he shuffled into the airlock.

The door behind him sealed itself, and he punched the exit button.

"Simon, can you hear me?" he asked, his voice scratchy.

"Yes. How are you?"

"I'm okay. I —" He froze as the outer door slid open and unveiled the high-contrast landscape, eternally lit by the oblique rays of the sun. The surface in front of him was well trampled, flattened by countless footprints.

Carl couldn't move. He stood there for the moment, petrified.

"Are you sure you are all right?" Simon's voice intruded on his fear, linking him back to the real world. "Nothing is going to happen to you," Simon added.

Carl forced back the memories that had surged forth, then he swallowed hard. "Yeah. I'm okay." And he did feel better. His trembling died down, and he felt in control once more.

He stepped out of the airlock, the sounds of his breathing louder now. The locator direction marker lit up a portion of the status panel near his forehead. It directed him toward a spot on the horizon opposite the sun.

As thoughts of "now or never" briefly coursed through his mind, Carl stepped out onto the surface. The first few paces were the hardest; then a feeling of normalcy slowly began to return to his mind and his walk.

"I am glad you are feeling more comfortable now," Simon said after Carl had traveled perhaps fifty meters.

"How do you know I am?"

"Routine things. Heart rate, pupil dilation, digestion rate, and a few others."

Carl fell silent again, settling into an easy rhythm, feeling the dirt below his feet crunch as he walked. Periodically, he rechecked the locator, also noting the signal strength. It was slowly rising.

He made his way through a carved path up the side of a crater wall, and soon he had traveled far enough that he began to worry about being able to find the way back. He wasn't sure the direction finder could pick up the beamed communications from Jane Doe Station. In an emergency, he could always use the suit radio or Simon and have someone talk him back in, but he didn't want to have to do that. He could probably travel in the direction of the

densest footprints, but that method sounded undependable.

"Simon, you could find the way back, couldn't you? I mean, tell me which way to go?"

"Certainly."

Despite — or perhaps because of — Simon's assurance, Carl felt a need to be able to do it on his own, so periodically he looked back the way he had come, to see what the features looked like from this perspective. It was during one of those times that he spotted sunlight twinkling off what looked like a shiny helmet several hundred meters behind him.

"Peter!" he said. "That must be him, trying to spoil my search."

"Maybe."

Carl turned back quickly so the other person wouldn't know he'd been spotted. Ahead, on almost the same heading as the transmitter, was a large rock outcropping. It would provide concealment.

"Let's find out" he said, continuing to move at his original pace. Soon he reached the rock. The surface dipped down slightly past that point, so he continued until he was probably below the follower's line of sight, and then doubled back, hunched slightly, moving sideways toward the rock cover. The shadow of the outcropping was just tall enough to conceal him if he crouched.

"What do you hope to accomplish?" Simon asked.

"I don't know. I at least want to find out who it is."

"But then what?"

"I'll figure that out afterward." He shifted his weight.

The wait took less than three minutes. The figure came over the rise slowly, maybe wondering why there was no sign of Carl farther on. That's when Carl came out of the shadow and switched on his suit radio.

"Who are you?" Carl asked.

There was a slight delay. "Peter," the follower said at last.

"Why can't you leave me alone? Why are you out here trying to ruin my search?"

"You can't do it alone. You're —"

"Don't you get tired of this? I keep telling you, I can manage fine on my own. I'm not a little child. I've come this far. Now, go back home." With that, Carl turned off his suit radio and started on his way again.

"He seemed to want to help," Simon said after a couple of moments.

Carl looked back and saw Peter standing in the same spot. "I don't know. Maybe he . . . maybe he's got another motive. I'm tense out here. Maybe I'm not making the best decisions."

"Maybe you are tense when you are inside, too."

"Meaning what?"

"Meaning people might be friendlier to you if you were friendly to them."

Carl looked back again. This time there was no sign of Peter. "He gave up awfully easy."

"You cannot have it both ways, Carl."

The next silence lasted much longer than before. Carl watched the signal strength continue to increase as he kept walking. The path took him gradually uphill along a featureless part of the lunar landscape. Carl made a beeline

for the source of the signal, trying to concentrate his attention on the task at hand. Fifteen minutes later, he stopped. Another crater lay directly in his path. On a hunch, he moved several paces sideways around the rim, first one way and then the other, and the direction reading pivoted accordingly.

"It must be close — probably in the crater," he said, looking for the easiest way up the outside wall. He noticed footprints in one spot, moved to it, and cautiously made his way up the short, gradually sloping incline. From the top of the rounded rim, he saw a crater that must have been about a hundred meters across. And for the first time, he spied the top of a rope ladder anchored into the rim a few meters to the left of where he stood. "Now that's convenient," he said to Simon. Carl moved slowly over to the ladder, peering down but failing to see the bottom of it after it disappeared into the shadow caused by the crater rim. He judged the inner surface of the crater to be six or eight meters below where he stood, and he was glad the ladder was there to help him descend, even if he was nervous about using it at the same time.

"Well, are you ready, Simon?" Carl asked, to steady himself.

"Yes" Simon replied. "Be careful."

Carl bent down, grabbed the first rung, and slowly swung his body around so he was poised backward at the top of the ladder. Starting down, he was almost glad that the darkness prevented him from seeing the bottom. He switched on his suit light after the first couple of rungs.

It was not a terribly long way down, but he was very careful and took his time. He occupied himself by worrying alternately about losing his grip and falling, and about Peter coming along and hauling up the ladder after he got down. But the more he thought about it, he had to admit that Peter hadn't done anything actually malicious.

"Maybe you're right about Peter," Carl said, grabbing a rung with one hand and releasing the one above it.

"In what respect?"

"Maybe he wants to be friends, but he's going about it wrong."

"How should he go about it?"

"If he just acted nicer, that would be enough."

"If that is what's required, why are you not friends with anyone else? Some of your peers seem decent enough."

"Wait a minute. Aren't you twisting this around? I haven't —" Carl stopped, suddenly confused and unable to argue effectively. Simon seemed to be implying that this whole situation was Carl's fault, and yet . . .

Carl's foot didn't find another rung of the ladder; instead, it came down on a flat surface that he hoped was the bottom of the crater. He turned and angled his suit light down to reveal several sets of footprints. The direction finder pointed him along a line that headed toward the opposite wall of the crater, passing through a couple of clumps of rocks along the way. The inside of the crater was gently sloped, just like the path leading up to it had been. The signal was very strong now.

"We're almost there," he said. He moved perpendicular to the direction indicated, and the signal line leading to the transmitter moved along with him, always pointing to the nearest clump of rocks. "That must be it." He moved

toward the rocks, and when he got within a couple of steps of them, he noticed a metallic, dust-covered box partially obscured from view.

Indeed, this was it. Exhilarated, without speaking to Simon, he moved to the box and leaned down to brush away some dust and read the lettering on its top surface. He expected it to tell him to take the transmitter back to Jane Doe Station. At last!

But that wasn't what it said. As Carl began reading the words, his stomach tightened, and he started breathing too heavily.

"No, Simon. It can't be. Can't I do anything right?"

Simon's only response was a quiet, "I'm sorry."

Carl sat down on a nearby rock and read the inscription again, hoping against hope that it would change. The words stared back at him:

*When you both are ready to proceed, push the switch labeled A. That will activate the second transmitter somewhere in this crater. One of you must go to the second transmitter.*

*Four minutes will be allowed for you to reach your positions. Then press the switch marked B. That will activate two more transmitters for fifteen seconds. The person who stays here has to note the direction of the first transmission. The other person must note the direction of the second transmission. These second two transmitters can be turned on only once in twenty-four hours, and only for fifteen minutes at a time. At the intersection of the lines of those transmissions, you will find a plastic disk, thirty centimeters in diameter, covered by a thin layer of dust. You must bring the disk back with you.*

*There are lots of footprints in this crater. Don't rely on them. The transmitters are placed in different locations for each search.*

Carl still couldn't believe it. To come all this way. To have to go back empty-handed. And why had he shut off all those possible conversations about the search?

"Simon, I don't understand. I'm tired, frustrated, angry with myself, but the thing that seems to bother me most is having to go back to that group without the disk. But, anyway, I can get along without them fine, just like I have been."

Simon did not seem to notice the last part of Carl's statement. "There is nothing wrong with needing people, even if they might not last forever," he said.

Carl was back on his feet now, wandering aimlessly, imagining the reception he'd get back at Jane Doe Station. He looked across to the far side of the crater, realizing how difficult it would be to take only one direction sighting, and then search all the area along that path. He should live so long.

It was no use. Simon couldn't help on this one, and he couldn't do it alone. He would have to go home without the disk and face the jeering and the laughing. But why should that bother him so much if he didn't need anyone?

Carl turned around to go back to the ladder, then saw a shape jutting out of the shadow formed by the crater rim. It looked like a suited figure. He looked up at the rim and saw the figure standing there, at the top of the ladder.

"It has to be Peter," Carl said. "But why? Is he going to pull the ladder up? Or is he going to help? Or just

stand there and gloat?"

"I believe you are asking the wrong person," answered Simon.

Carl stood watching for a long moment, almost afraid to find out why the other figure was here. Finally, with a catch in his throat, he switched on his suit's communications and said, "Is that you, Peter?"

"Yes." He didn't add anything more. This wasn't going to be easy, thought Carl.

"Did you come to help?" Carl asked. He didn't know if the dread sounded in his voice.

"Do you want me to?" came the response.

Carl didn't say anything for a moment. "Yes," he finally replied. It was one of the hardest things he had ever done.

"Okay," Peter said. "I'm coming down."

Neither spoke again until they both stood near the box.

"I don't mean to be ungrateful" Carl started hesitantly. "But why are you here? You've played tricks on me before, and I haven't made it very easy on you lately. Is this your good deed for the day?"

"Not exactly," said Peter. "You're . . . you're kind of a challenge, I guess you'd say. I see my dad getting along with people he really dislikes. You're not nearly so annoying as some of the people in Jane Doe politics, but I could never reach you. What I mean —"

"I know. I think I understand. And . . . and thanks for coming out here. I didn't realize that part of the search was to promote the buddy system."

"I tried to get that across to you without coming right out and saying it, but I couldn't get through to you. It's kind of an unwritten law that someone who's been on the search can't give away any details to someone who hasn't done it. I guess you have to be willing to accept help without being told that you actually need help to finish the search." Then Peter paused briefly and smiled.

"If you ask me, that sounds like an idea from the adults. And, when you think about it, I suppose the adults would have found a way to lock up the suits and have emergency overrides if they didn't see any value in the search. Like my dad says, Jane Doe Station is the frontier right now."

Carl wished Peter wouldn't talk so much about his father, but he didn't say anything. He had been careful not to interrupt, but now Peter seemed to be done talking.

"Are you ready?" Carl asked.

"Let's do it."

Peter had suggestions on how to get it done quickly, so Carl listened some more. Soon he was bounding toward the second transmitter, and he switched off his suit communications long enough to say, "Thanks, Simon."

"For what?"

"You know very well what for." He switched the suit radio back on.

It wasn't long before they were both ready for the new sightings. Carl activated the switch labeled B, and they marked the headings. They started on their separate courses. About ten minutes later they met again.

A spiral search in the dust yielded the plastic disk in less than three minutes.

Almost too quickly, it was over and they were on the

way back. Carl was quiet as they walked, thinking. At last he said, "Peter, I'll explain later, but I'd like to turn off my suit radio for just a few minutes. Okay?"

"Fine."

"Are you all right?" Simon asked after Carl had been silent for a long moment.

"Yes and no," he replied slowly.

"Can you be more specific?"

"I mean I've been doing a lot of thinking."

"And?"

"And I've realized a few things about the two of us."

"Go on."

"Pel never actually planned on my keeping you, did he?"

This time, Simon's voice came slowly, too. "No," he said with what sounded almost like sadness. "No, I am afraid not."

"Simon, I feel so helpless. There's no way I can ever

repay you for the things you've shown me. What could any human do for you?"

"What have I shown you?"

"You know. That Peter just wanted me to accept him . . . that maybe he wants to be a leader like his father. That perhaps I need people more than I thought."

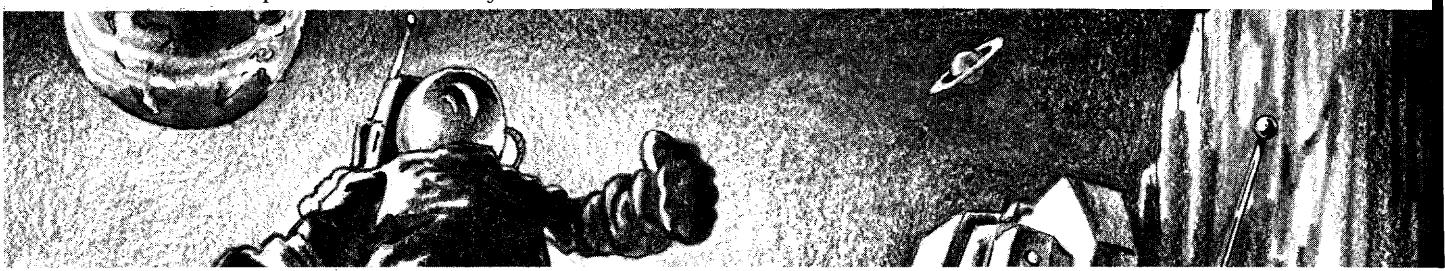
"I did not show you those things. You found them."

"You know perfectly well what I mean."

As the two boys reached the top of the next rise, the station's antennae and solar panels glinted in the sun. They came closer and Carl could see that near the airlock, squeezed against the window, was a large crowd of kids. Even from here they looked excited. Carl held the disk away from his body so they could see it.

"Simon," he said fiercely, his vision blurring momentarily, "I don't care how soon Pel expects you back. I want you for at least another week."

5



## VISIT PERN: LAND OF DRAGONS.

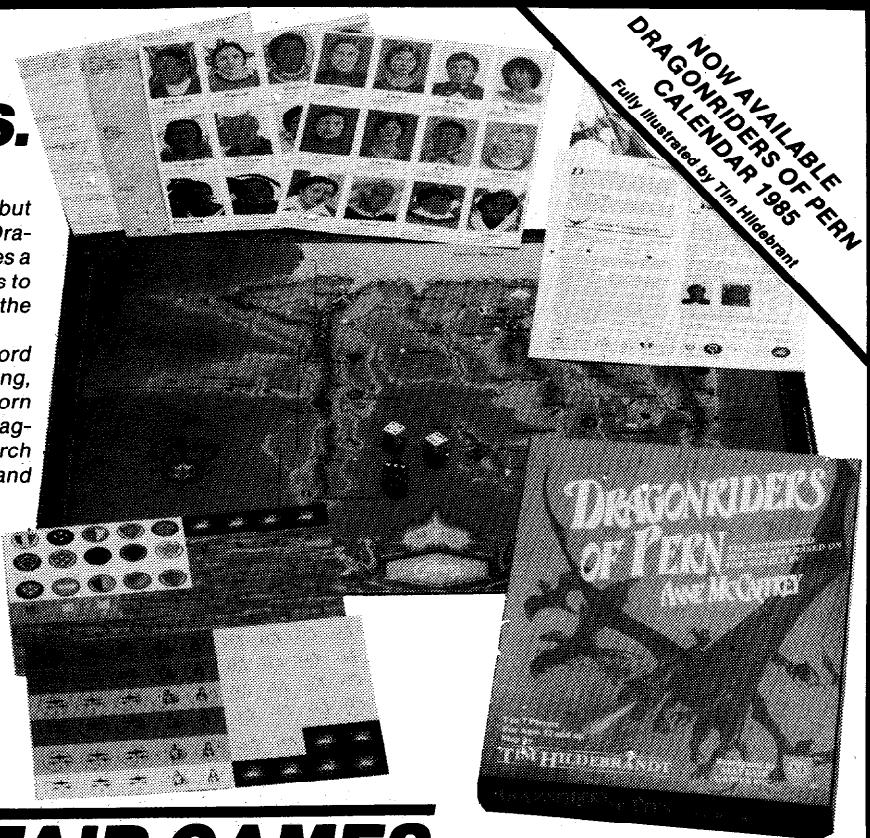
Pern barely escaped destruction from Thread once, but only through the fortuitous arrival of the Oldtimers: Dragonriders from Pern's past. Now, once again, Pern faces a crisis; the bitter infighting between the Weyrs threatens to break the unity of the Dragonriders and leave Pern at the mercy of Thread.

As Weyleader, each player tries to ally the various Lord Holders and Craftmasters to his cause while defending Pern with fire-breathing dragons, from the space born Thread. If a player spends too much time and effort engaging in politics, the Thread will break through and scorch the countryside. Spend too much time fighting Thread, and another Weyr will gain supremacy.

Pern is a low to moderately complex game for one to seven players. Included in the game is a map of Pern's northern continent painted by Tim Hildebrand, 38 full color cards depicting the major personalities on Pern by Robin Wood, and a major new article on Thread fighting written by Todd Johnson and Anne McCaffrey!

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# ANNOUNCING THE 4th ANNUAL MINIATURES OPEN Sat., Aug. 18, 1984 Kenosha, Wisconsin

This year, the GEN CON® 17 Convention will host the 4th Annual Miniatures Open. The largest such event of its kind at any game convention, the Miniatures Open offers the novice, practiced, or experienced miniaturists an opportunity to enter virtually any type of painted figures for competitive judging. The following rules will govern this year's Miniatures Open.

- A.** Any miniature figure cast by any recognized manufacturer may be used. Competitors may use any type of paints, and any type of brush or spray techniques on their figures.
- B.** Miniatures must be hand carried to the Convention by those individuals entering them. Entries may be submitted in behalf of another person.
- C.** All entries, with the exception of Historical Gaming Units, must be mounted on a stand, plaque, etc., to minimize the possibility of damage or theft. Convention Management is not responsible in any way for any theft or damage, though reasonable precautions will be taken to preclude such theft or damage.
- D.** All entries must be accompanied by a completed Miniatures Open Entry Form available at the Miniatures Open Registration Table. Each person entering a miniature must sign his or her name and Convention Registration Number on that Entry Form.
- E.** All entries must be submitted by Noon on Sat., Aug. 18, 1984.
- F.** Those entering figures in competition must be present at the judging to win. Prizes will be presented in the Miniatures Open area at 4 p.m. on

Sat., Aug. 18, 1984.

- G.** All entries must be reclaimed by 6 p.m. Sat., Aug. 18, 1984, or they will be discarded. Only those individuals who entered figures may claim them after the judging. To claim a miniature, the person entering it must first notify the security attendant, then sign a receipt for each figure before taking them.
- H.** The decisions of the judges are final. Points will be awarded for adherence to the category description, painting ability, creativity in presentation or modification, etc.
- I.** Junior Category entrants must be 15 years old or younger on Aug. 18, 1984. Junior Category entries may be of any type figure(s), and will be judged separately from other categories.

## CATEGORIES

### I. HISTORICAL UNITS

Scale: Any under 40mm.  
Definition: Any recognizable military unit from any historical period. Only miniatures in this category need not be mounted.

### II. MONSTER

Scale: Any  
Definition: A monster is defined as any fantasy or science fiction creature not basically humanoid. Dwarves, elves, etc. are not considered monsters. Entries may consist of any single monster or a diorama of monsters. Dioramas will be judged as a whole, not on the quality of any single figure.

**DIORAMA DEFINED:** A scenario of any size in which miniature figures are placed directly into the setting usually by removing their base or by

working the miniatures into the ground surface. A diorama is not a group of gaming pieces placed on a surface for the limited purpose of competition.

### III. FANTASY DIORAMA

Scale: Any under 40mm.  
Definition: Any fantasy setting. Monsters are allowed in a Fantasy Diorama if that diorama is not exclusively monsters.

### IV. GENERAL DIORAMA

Scale: Any  
Definition: Any non-fantasy setting, including historical, modern, science fiction, etc.

### V. PERSONALITY

Scale: Any under 40mm.  
Definition: Any non-monster figure of any type. Although extra points may be gained for an original type of setting, such a setting is not necessary. All personality miniatures must be mounted individually.

### VI. JUNIOR CATEGORY

Scale: Any  
Definition: Any figure of any type submitted by or on behalf of an individual meeting the age requirements as stated.

### BEST OF SHOW

The "Best of Show" trophy is awarded to a single entry in recognition of its total excellence. The "Best of Show" winner may be selected from any of the categories described above.

### MASTERS

Scale: Any  
Definition: Any genre is allowed. Only those individuals who have been recognized as Masters in past GEN CON Miniatures Open Competitions may enter.

# Ares™

SCIENCE-FICTION GAMING SECTION



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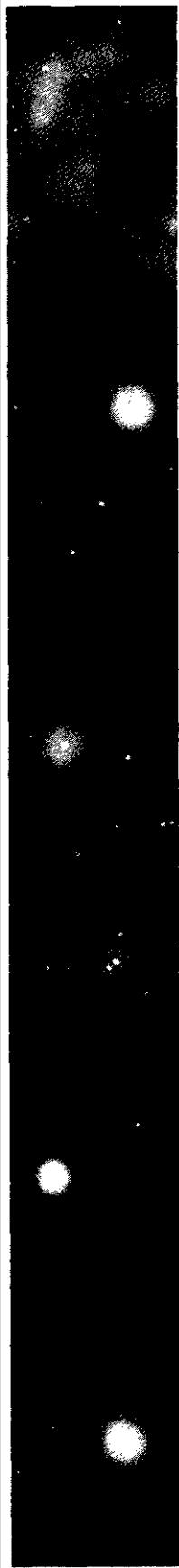
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Questions, answers, and advice on the UNIVERSE™ game.



## ON THE COVER

Pinned down by enemy fire, two Star Law Planetary Officers attempt to retake a hijacked interstellar liner before it can escape the Prenglar system. Details on Star Law may be found in "Freeze! Star Law!" by Kim Eastland. Cover art by Clyde Caldwell.



Often the only interaction that player characters in science-fiction games have with the law comes when they are arrested for robbing banks with laser rifles. In the STAR FRONTIERS® game, however, characters may become law officers themselves; "Freeze! Star Law!" presents new information on the toughest interstellar law enforcement agency in the Frontier, with suggestions for developing your own Star Law characters and scenarios.

One of the oldest and best-known role-playing games is Game Designers' Workshop's TRAVELLER® game. The designer of the TRAVELLER game system, Marc Miller, presents a description of the Moon thousands of years into the future in the fourth of our "lunar" portraits. Earth has been conquered by the Third Imperium and the Moon is now just a quiet, peaceful world . . . or is it?

Though SIMon Sidekick isn't in the ARESTM Section, this is a good place to point it out. It is a superb science-fiction tale about life as lived on the Moon, and what it takes for a boy who lives there to come of age. It brings the reality of space travel home.

The Gamma Expert returns with the second part of his article on the Moon of the GAMMA WORLD® game, listing a few of the wonderful, highly-destructive mutant monsters running loose at Tycho Center that will cheer the heart of any GAMMA WORLD game referee. They ain't Munchkins, Toto.

We've gotten some mail asking for more superhero material for the MARVEL SUPERHEROTM and CHAMPIONSTM games; we'll see what we can do about this in future editions of the ARES section. A nice stack of STAR FRONTIERS and GAMMA WORLD game articles is also appearing from our readers. If there is a game you'd like to see covered here, write to us and let us know. If you'd like to write for us yourself, we'd be happy to hear from you!

*The editors*

ARESTM Section 87  
THE SCIENCE-FICTION GAMING SECTION

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According to the STAR FRONTIERS game glossary, the Star Law Rangers operate as an interstellar police force that "concentrates on finding Sathar agents, but also fights space pirates and other interstellar criminals." We also know that the Rangers have large territorial areas of authority because in the history section we find that Rangers "track the Sathar's agents from planet to planet and fight them on their own terms." Beyond that, there is little for an aspiring STAR FRONTIERS game referee or player to consider when dealing with Star Law forces. The purpose of this article is to fill in some holes that exist about this intergalactic organization and its members.

Before proceeding any further, let's look at a few facts and assumptions that will help define law enforcement and military authorities in the STAR FRONTIERS game.

\* The peace of the Frontier region is maintained in space by the UPF Spacefleet (see the STAR FRONTIERS Knight Hawks game). We assume that actual authority in deep space is in the hands of the Spacefleet and not the Star Law.

\* The defense of individual planets is the responsibility of their armies and militias. This is certainly true for civilized planets. Whether the armed forces are made up of volunteers, inductees, or mercenaries would depend upon the planetary government, its population and resources, etc. (in other words, the referee). It is safe to assume that matters of immediate local defense (riots, revolutions, massive pirate raids, etc.) usually fall under the authority of a planetary army and the space fleet it uses for orbital defense.

\* Every large city will have its own police force to guard its citizenry and maintain law and order. Some planets might have police with wider territorial authority for counties, states, provinces, nations, or continents.

# "Freeze! Star Law!"

## *The interstellar police of the STAR FRONTIERS® game*

By Kim Eastland

\* Although the interstellar company most often referred to in the STAR FRONTIERS game is the Pan-Galactic Corporation, the Knight Hawks Campaign Book notes that it is only one of a half-dozen similar mega-corporations in the Frontier. It seems obvious that each mega-corp would want their own security force to guard their property and interests, to investigate industrial espionage, etc. No one mega-corp security force would be trusted by any other to always stay within its corporate authority.

\* In addition to the above, innumerable other law enforcement agencies would be at work: high-tech mercenaries hired by rich individuals as body guards, private investigative firms licensed to operate locally or planet-wide, and so forth.

As you might guess, the problem of interplanetary security is a big one. If the theft of a Pan-Galactic Executive Vice President's personal belongings occurred, it would bring in Pan-Galactic's Security Force, any private firms that the VP had employed, and (if notified) the city authorities. If the felon was loose on the planet, that might bring in all planetary investigators authorized to keep the local peace. If certain major crimes were committed during the robbery, say the theft of a government shuttle for a getaway, the armed forces might now be involved.

However, if the fugitive leaves the planet and escapes into deep space, would the Spacefleet be involved? What happens if one of the possessions stolen was a device that would be of interest to a hostile alien race? Could a Port Loren beat cop try to arrest a Sathar in deep space? Obviously, there must be a law enforcement agency with far-reaching powers and jurisdiction that can work with different local agencies while transcending their limitations. This is the job of Star Law.

The exact crimes and jurisdictional areas that Star Law would be involved with can be laid out by individual game

referees. What is given here is a suggested organizational structure for Star Law. We hear a lot about the Rangers, a glamorous branch of Star Law, but in fact they are only one small part of a stellar agency dedicated to galactic peace.

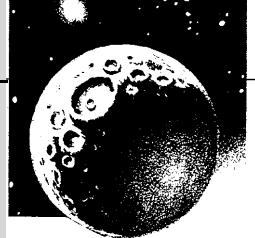
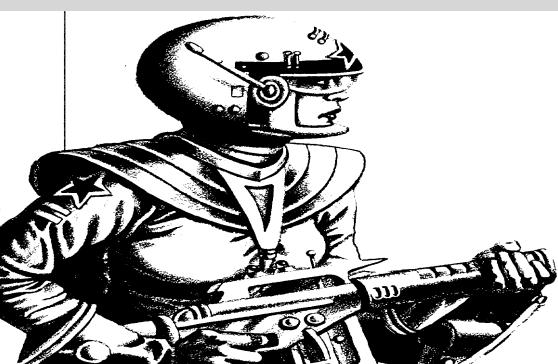
We know that Star Law Headquarters is located in the city of Port Loren on the planet Gran Quivera ("The Hub of the Frontier Sector") in the Prenglar system. We also know there is a Star Law base on Morgaine's World in the same system. Beyond this, we can create some "basic facts" as a foundation for Star Law.

1) A Star Law base exists on every civilized world of any size in the Frontier Sector. These bases range from large complexes to one-man offices, depending upon that world's needs.

2) Star Law itself does not own a great fleet of ships or an army of combat vehicles. Each base would probably have an array of fast, light armed vehicles for planetary and interplanetary transportation, such as flit-boards, rocket bikes, skimmers, etc.

3) Star Law would not have vast armies of combat personnel because the UPF and individual planetary governments would not want a powerful Star Law undermining their own powers and authority. Instead, Star Law would have numerous agents with wide-ranging authority who would not pose a threat to city or regional police forces or planetary armies.

4) Star Law personnel would have the power to call the UPF's attention to major transgressions by city or planetary governments, though they try to avoid matters arising from local politics. They can get military assistance from Spacefleet or other authorities if deemed necessary by the UPF Security Council. An individual Star Law agent's firepower would be impressive since he must often uphold the law when working with few allies. An average Star Law



mission team would include 2-6 members.

5) Any ventures beyond the Frontier "on the Rim" (as the unexplored and possibly dangerous systems are called) or into alien space (neutral or enemy) would be officially undertaken by Star Law.

Any unofficial ventures would be made by mercenaries, bounty hunters, etc.

6) Residents of the Frontier Sector who are not of the four main races but who have clean records and initiative might also be Star Law officers. Indeed, when dealing with the Rim, they might be more desirable as agents than one of the major races.

7) All investigations of known hostile races (Sathar, Mechanons, Zuraqqor, etc.) would be made under the authority of Star Law. A Star Law agent's authority level would be very great in this area.

8) Investigations dealing with possible crimes committed by Star Law personnel would be handled by a special branch of Star Law Internal Affairs that answers only to the UPF Security Council.

9) All investigations of other established security forces (Spacefleet, world armies, etc.) or interplanetary governing bodies (such as the United Planetary Federation) would be handled by special investigation committees appointed by the Star Law Captain-General.

10) Under article 15 of the Securities Act, a Star Lawman of Ranger rank or above may commandeer any ship, private or UPF-owned, not engaged in an active defense of UPF space for the purposes of pursuing enemy agents in or out of the Frontier.

11) Under article 12 of the Securities Act, a Star Lawman of any rank can impose Stellar Law in a city, county, or continent if he deems it necessary to maintain civil obedience.

12) Under article 13 of the Securities Act, a Star Lawman of Ranger rank or above may also impose Stellar Law on an entire planet if he deems it necessary to maintain civil obedience.

13) Under article 14 of the Securities Act, the Star Law Captain-General may impose Stellar Law on an entire system if he deems it necessary to maintain civil obedience or UPF security. Only the UPF Security Council can declare Stellar Law on the entire Frontier.

14) Star Law retains its authorities during both peacetime and wartime.

## Star Law Ranking

Although there are many different positions within Star Law and various grades within those positions, there are

only a few that STAR FRONTIER game players or referees need concern themselves with. The titles and definitions of those positions are:

1) Star Law Deputy Officer (DO): A Star Law DO is a rookie officer, fresh out of the academy. He or she is in effect a lower-grade City Officer and is assigned to assist someone of a higher rank, usually a full City Officer. After a period of time, usually one to three years, the Deputy Officer is evaluated and may be promoted to a higher grade. On rare occasions a DO might be promoted into positions as high as a Chief Agent, depending upon his background, skills, and abilities. A Star Law DO cannot be immediately promoted to Ranger status, however.

2) Star Law City Officer (CO): A Star Law CO may have many Deputy Officers below him. Usually a CO is a Star Lawman who has authority only over a particular city. COs work only in major cities on highly advanced planets.

3) Star Law Planetary Officer (PO): A Planetary Officer may have many Deputy Officers below him; on major civilized planets, he may command some COs as well. A Planetary Officer cannot exercise his authority on another planet unless ordered to do so by his Commanding Officer at Port Loren.

4) Star Law Deputy Agent (DA): Star Law DAs may command numbers of Deputy Officers, POs, and COs. A Deputy Agent governs investigations that assist other law enforcement and security forces. DAs can command POs and COs in their planetary system only.

5) Star Law Chief Agent (CA): A Chief Agent is one rank above the DA and can command all officers below his rank. He has the power to override the authority of other security forces within his planetary system when dealing with investigations there. A CA is extremely powerful within his system.

6) Star Law Ranger: Rangers are a sort of cross between DAs and CAs in authority, except they can exercise their power in any system within the Frontier Sector. They operate one level above CAs in the Star Law chain of command, but usually work with other security forces rather than commanding them. Rangers are usually called in when hostile alien intrigue is suspected (Sathar plots in particular).

7) Star Law Marshals: This unusual position is usually awarded to Rangers whose jurisdiction extend into the Rim systems. Some Marshals patrol the Rim exclusively. They have authority over other Star Law Rangers and all lower

ranks. Their numbers are few and turnover is high. They usually work alone.

8) Star Law Commanders: A Star Law Commander is a Marshal empowered to venture into alien space. He has complete authority to operate in the UPF's best interests there. In the Frontier and Rim, he can command all of the above levels of Star Lawmen. Commanders are the only persons in Star Law who can legally kill an intelligent lifeform without any evidence but their own word. Only a handful of Commanders exist, and they report to the UPF Security Council along with the Star Law Captain-General.

Other sections of Star Law that might come into play are:

1) Star Law Posse: A group of Star Law Troopers whose mission is to help out Star Lawmen in trouble. They can only be assembled by a Marshal, Commander, or Star Law HQ. Their stats are usually normal for their race, and they should be armed and armored competitively by the referee. NOTE: The posse does not exist to haul the player's "afterburners" out of the fire all the time. They can help if the referee has swamped the players with foes.

2) Star Law Penal Officers: The worst criminals in the Frontier Sector are kept at certain penal colonies. Maintaining these secluded prisons and the transport ships that conduct prisoners there is the business of Star Law Penal Officers. Outside of their penal functions, they operate at Deputy Officer rank.

3) Star Law Internal Affairs Agents: When investigating Star Lawmen, IA agents have the command capability of a Marshal.

4) Star Law Undercover Agents: While most Star Lawmen can go undercover, these agents are in "deep cover." They have maintained their cover for years and may not even reveal themselves to player characters, but can pass information to them secretly. They usually only answer to Star Law Marshals, Commanders, or HQ, and are found in high risk areas such as the Rim.

## Star Law Authority

All Star Lawmen have the following powers in addition to those listed above:

1) The authority to detain, pursue, and warn or arrest anyone within their jurisdiction who breaks the law. The decision to warn or arrest is at the Star Lawman's discretion and dependent upon such factors as past record, severity of crime (speeding vs. possession of a weapon), attitude of lawbreaker, etc.

2) The authority to commandeer any

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vehicle and pilot it, or cause it to be piloted, in excess of normal legal regulations, in an attempt to fulfill section 1. This authority does *not* include any overt actions that unnecessarily threaten society.

3) The authority to search a premises in an attempt to fulfill section 1 if due cause exists. In those cases where Star Law Command can be contacted immediately for confirmation, such must be obtained. In those cases where Star Law Command is more than ten minutes communications distance away and the Star Lawman decides that this wait is to the detriment of or dangerous to society, the Star Lawman may gain access to the premises in any fashion possible. In cases where a Star Lawman is in pursuit of a criminal or lawbreaker or is witness to a criminal act, then the Star Lawman may gain access to the premises in any fashion possible.

4) The authority to protect society, himself, or private property (in that order), whether in an attempt to fulfill section 1 or in the normal course of his activities, by whatever means necessary excluding measures which may be more harmful than that which is threatening society, himself, or private property.

5) The authority to close down any establishment, business, or operation which is either breaking a law or endangering society and the common good until the appropriate agency, governmental department, or proper level of authority can investigate the problem. (In some instances the Star Lawman himself must investigate the alleged crime).

Obviously, the Star Lawmen have a much greater level of authority than normal law enforcement agents, but they also have a much greater responsibility. Because of this, the screening of Star Law applicants is incredibly detailed and thorough, and includes Telol injections, psychopropes, and rigorous indoctrination. In the entire history of Star Law (127 years), there has never been a recorded instance of a "bad apple" getting through the screening, though some Lawmen have gone bad after years of stress and exposure to criminal element.

To placate an always suspicious public, recent innovations such as the file computer and recorder helmet have been introduced into the Star Law ranks, especially among Lawmen working in highly dangerous or urban areas. The file computer is a specialized computer that does nothing but record information verbally fed into it by a

Star Lawman. These 15 cm. square devices are then tied into Star Law's mainframe computers at the end of every shift, and their info is dumped into the general information pool. Star Lawmen thus create a running account of their own activities, an open "file" on various suspects, and recordings of eyewitness accounts and testimonies. The info-pool contains a vast wealth of current information that can be made available whenever it is needed to Star Lawmen only.

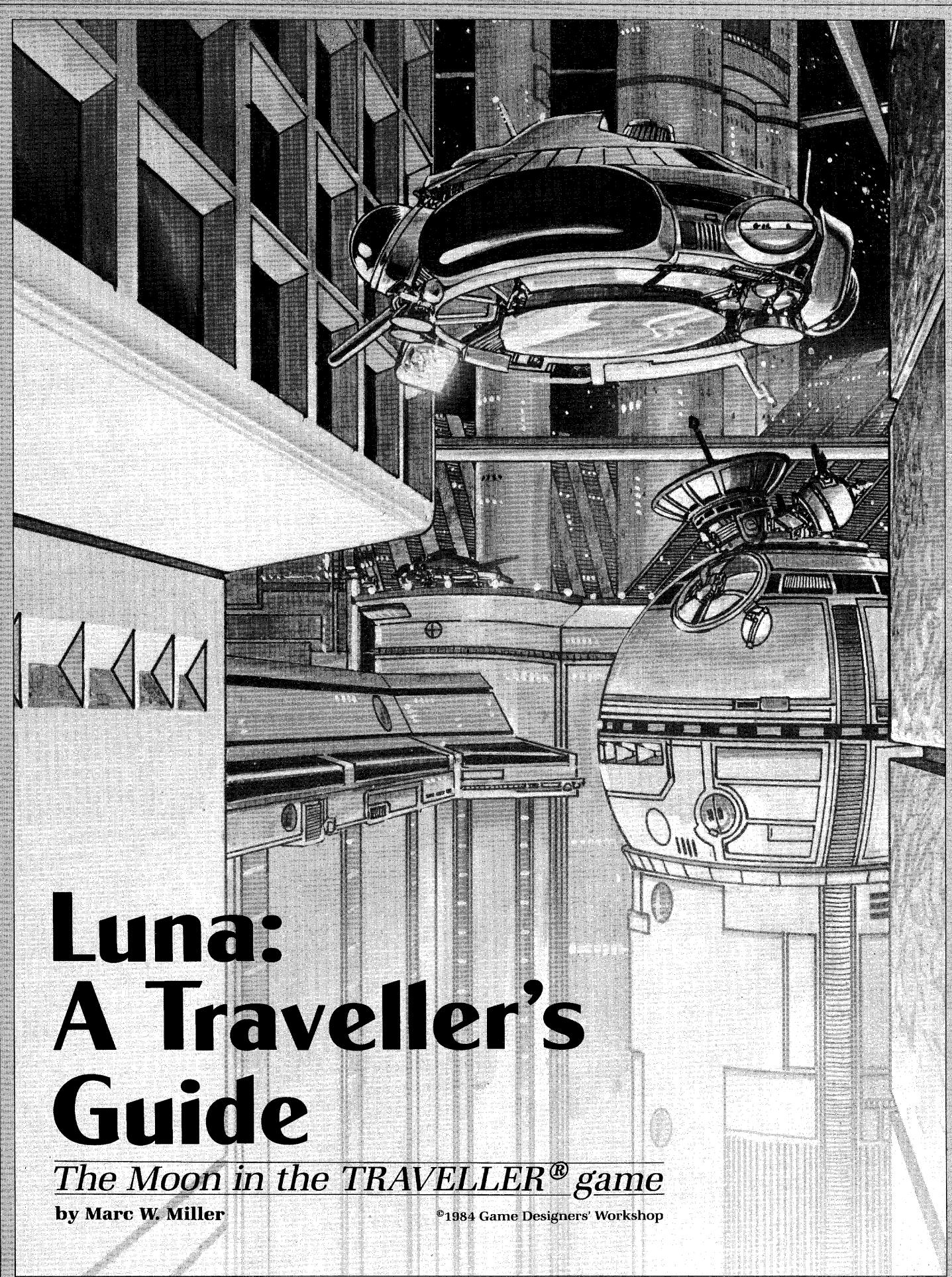
A recorder helmet operates in much the same way and even has a file computer built in, but it also has a tiny visual scanner/recorder built in that can record the case visually as well. The helmet can either be broadcast to a local recording facility or use micro-discs in the built-in recorder to store the images.

### Termination of cases and reassignment

A Star Lawman under the rank of Ranger can be called off a case or have his case closed by either a personal directive or general reassignment, both issued by Star Law Headquarters. Star Law Rangers can only have their cases closed or be reassigned by personal directive from Star Law HQ. Star Law Marshals cannot have their cases closed, but can be reassigned, but only by the Star Law Captain-General, and then another Star Lawmen of equal or higher rank must take over their cases. Star Law Commanders cannot be reassigned or have their cases closed, but they can be recalled by the Star Law Captain-General for briefing or debriefing. Star Law Commanders can be forcibly retired, but another Star Law Commander must take over the case, and the entire casenote and official actions ordered are reported to the Security council to prevent any cover-ups.

### Final thoughts

Obviously, the number of scenarios that can be built upon the needs of the different types of Star Lawmen listed above is far greater than those for a "one-level" Star Law. Game referees might wish to start players as Star Law Deputy Officers and bring them "up through the ranks." The point at which PCs are promoted should be determined by the referee and should depend less on PC skill levels than on how PCs conduct themselves on cases. As in any law enforcement organization, the remuneration may not be high, but the excitement and satisfaction of a job well done is often reward enough. A



# Luna: A Traveller's Guide

*The Moon in the TRAVELLER® game*

by Marc W. Miller

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Reference: Library Data, Solomani Rim Sector Edition;  
Gashidda, III

LUNA F20076C-F N Research Laboratory. Colony.

The only natural satellite of Terra (Solomani Rim 1827). 3476 km diameter; Gravity=0.1653 (Earth=1); K (density constant)=0.610; Mass=0.123 (Earth=1); Albedo=0.07. Orbits Terra at 60 diameters with a period of approximately 28 days. Temperature ranges from 100°C. to -100°C during the 655-hour local day.

Spacers should contact Terra system control at Copernicus Down Spaceport on standard frequency beta. All traffic within 200 diameters of Terra is under strict control from Luna; traffic in outer system is controlled from Rhea.

**Overview:** Luna is a province of Terra with status comparable to that of a continent; it is allowed self-rule for internal affairs but subject to the Terran Documents of Confederation which safeguard human and corporate rights. External affairs are handled by the Terran Ministry of State.

Since the conclusion of the Solomani Rim War, the Terra system has been under a stewardship administered by the Imperial military governor. The Military Governor for Terra reports directly to the Office of the Emperor, and holds the power to require or prohibit any activity deemed detrimental to the Imperium. The military government of Terra (and Luna) is scheduled to end 365-1111 Imperial.

Lunar industry depends primarily on mining and ore processing, although some ship construction takes place as well. Luna is a popular destination for Terran honeymoons (another name for Luna is "The Moon"), with several resort complexes at Copernicus catering to tourists and vacationers.

**Population and Demographics:** The eight million people on Luna are concentrated in three population centers — Archimedes, Copernicus, and Plato. Additional settlements such as the mines at Sinus Iridium and the Montes Apenninus, Farside Station, the Imperial research laboratory at Clavius, and the Imperial Naval Base at Theophilus account for less than 10% of the total population.

The oldest settlement on Luna is Archimedes (30° N, 5°W), established in -2510 as a small mining base. The location allowed construction of quarters and life support facilities under the crater walls while providing access to the mines in the Montes Apenninus. Archimedes is still Luna's major mining center.

Although pre-landing surveys can be credited with pinpointing the location, the mines at the Montes Apenninus proved to be an unexpectedly rich lode. They have been producing lead, iron, nickel, copper, and radioactives for over three thousand years, and the shafts now reach as far as twelve kilometers beneath the lunar surface. During the Long Night, strip mining of Mare Imbrium was also attempted, but the operation proved uneconomical and was discontinued in -800. Recently, some efforts have been made to restore the strip-mined portions of Mare Imbrium to their original condition.

Archimedes' population of 3.6 million is primarily concerned with the mining industry. Greater Archimedes includes several suburbs which have grown up around the main crater; these serve as bedroom communities.

Copernicus (20°N, 10°W) was originally a small scientific base operated by the United States of America, a dominant Terran nation. It was nearly closed down in -2403 when the major mining expansion took place at Archimedes. The *Harriman* disaster changed all that: the collision of an outgoing mass driver cargo module with the incoming passenger liner

*George Harriman* cost 34 lives and pointed out the difficulties of landing spacecraft through a maze of mass driver launch points. Since the mines and the launch points couldn't be shifted, the starport was — to Copernicus.

Copernicus is the trade and travel center of Luna. Cargos and passengers normally pass through the spaceport there, though special arrangements for landings at other locations are possible. Ninety percent of all arrivals to Luna pass through Copernicus.

About 2.2 million people live at Copernicus, most engaged in (or in support of) marketing and distribution. The Lunar Senate, Chamber, and Executive are located at Copernicus, as are the Lunar Central Bank and several major trade brokerages.

Copernicus Down Spaceport lies southeast of Copernicus. Its extensive landing pad complexes reflect a time when the port was busier and had greater importance than today. Fully two-thirds of the facilities are no longer in use, though they stand ready in vacuum for reactivation if needed. Some sheltered areas have been converted to warehouses or business offices, but even those areas are under-utilized.

The academic community that has grown up around Plato (53°N, 10°W) has made it the third largest settled area on Luna, with a population of about 1,000,000. Plato is the site of the main campus of the University of Luna, regarded as one of the top schools for high energy physics and astronomy in the Terra system. The Plato community is the intellectual center of Luna, with local video, plays, and concerts continually being produced by faculty and students. The Lunar Court of Appeals also holds its sessions at Plato.

The remaining settlements on Luna are specialized areas devoted to specific activities. Clavius is a modern, high-technological industrial park with production facilities for electronic and gravity chips, vacuum-process equipment, and thin-film devices. The prime operator for the industrial park is Gesichtskries Sternshiffbau, AG (also known as GSbAG), with other corporations leasing its facilities. The most apparent feature of the park is the lack of a central dome. The atmosphere is contained by a network of focused grav modules which retard the escape of gasses; leakage is constantly replaced. Although there were some problems with the system in its early years, it has functioned without major problems since -1080.

Farside Station is a scientific research base operated as a branch of the University of Luna. Accessible only by spacecraft, the station is located in the center of the lunar farside, away from light, energy, and particle pollution associated with industrialized areas on the near side of the Moon. The station is primarily concerned with radio astronomy and cosmic ray research. Much of the activity at Farside Station has military applications, and access to the facility is restricted.

A mining center exists at Sinus Iridium. It was opened during the Solomani Rim War, closed after the war, and was recently reopened. Though still in the developmental stages, its developers hope that it will someday rival the Montes Apenninus mines in output.

Theophilus is a Imperial Naval base and training center.

**Transport networks:** The major settlements on Luna are linked primarily by monorail. The same problems which moved the main spaceport to Copernicus also pose a threat to unrestricted grav vehicle travel, and led to the construction of monorail links between Copernicus, Plato, Archimedes, and (most recently) Sinus Iridium. Aristillus and Autolycus, the residential suburbs east of Archimedes, are linked by a spur to Archimedes and thus to the main monorail system.

Grav vehicles are strictly controlled on Luna, and major areas are totally off limits to any vehicles at all. Where such

vehicles are allowed, they must be in contact with central vehicle control at all times.

In response to commercial needs, in 320 a grav vehicle route was laid out parallel to the monorail lines, to allow heavy-duty goods transportation between settlements. By 450, double monorail lines had been constructed to replace the old single lines, but the need for grav vehicle routes was still increasing. A limited number of clearly marked gravways were constructed as a result.

Each gravway has a central guidance cable which provides signals to grav vehicle autopilots, keeping the vehicles at safe intervals and on course. For visual identification, the route has been marked on the surface by draglines which create a churned effect in the lunar dust. These gravways feature franchised turnouts (every 400 kilometers or so) which provide food, fuel, and repairs.

Gravways connect Archimedes, Plato, Sinus Iridium, and Copernicus in a rough circle, with branches extending from Copernicus to Clavius, and from Archimedes to the Imperial Naval Base at Theophilus.

Surface (wheeled or tracked) transport on Luna is rare; grav vehicles are more efficient and faster. In addition, conservation and preservation groups have forcefully made the point that vehicle tracks are not weathered or eroded away. In some cases it is possible to positively date surface vehicle tracks to the earliest surface explorations. The few surface vehicles allowed are purpose items such as dirtmovers or construction equipment at the mines, or special prospecting vehicles.

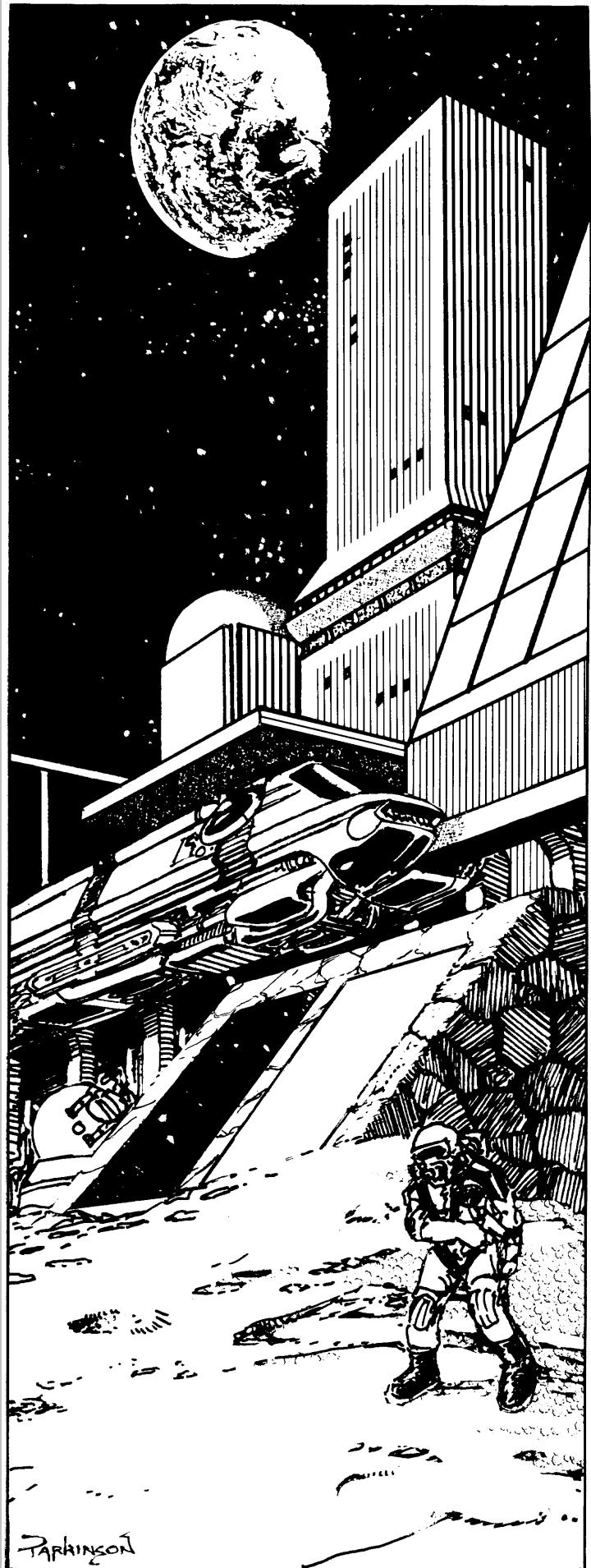
Long distance transport, defined as covering more than 2000 km, is generally accomplished by spacecraft. It is the most economical means for sending bulk shipments and is quick as well. Landing pads for such shipments exist at each major settlement. Spacecraft access to the landing pads is relatively easy, provided the proper paperwork (a misnomer – it's all done electronically these days) is obtained first. Such spacecraft are under strict traffic control from Archimedes.

**Political Science:** Luna was originally a colony of the United States of America with special provisions for its non-American citizens. With the passing years, it evolved into several national colonies (American, European, Soviet, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian), but was eventually unified as a nation under the United Nations in -2433.

The current government of Luna is a representative democracy based on population and employment. Citizens elect representatives to the Lunar Senate based on geographic districts containing equal populations, and to the Chamber based on employment (the miners' union elects a Deputy, the university professors elect a Deputy, etc.) The Chamber and the Senate each select half the cabinet, which then chooses a prime minister as the actual head of government.

Luna has three major political parties: the Lunar Labor Party, the People's Social Party, and the Preservationist Party. The Labor Party generally controls the Chamber and naturally seeks to protect labor unions on Luna. The People's Social Party is a liberal, left-leaning organization which advocates government programs for social welfare, including programs for free air, subsidized housing, and guaranteed employment. The Social Party generally controls the Senate.

The Preservationist Party has environmental concerns as its primary issue. Although it has never controlled the Senate or the Chamber, it is skilled in establishing coalitions and taking into consideration passage of measures which it favors. Recent Preservationist issues have been restoration of the strip-mined areas of Mare Imbrium, strict regulation of mining projects in the Sinus Iridium, and population control.



## **Rumors are told of scattered Solomani bases across the lunar surface. Limited library data suggests that some such bases may still exist. A thorough search of the lunar surface by the Imperial Navy in 1080 failed to find any bases not already charted.**

The Solomani Party (outlawed following the Solomani Rim War, but legalized in 1095) has a membership of about 2% of the total lunar population. The Solomani Party is formally disassociated from the Solomani Freedom Army, but an informal relationship between them apparently exists. Although the Solomani Freedom Army claimed responsibility for some acts of terrorism in the years after the war, it failed to find any true base of support and has no force in local politics.

**History:** The first landings on Luna took place in -2552; scattered investigations of the lunar surface were conducted by American, Soviet, and European teams between -2552 and -2501. The settlement of Luna began in earnest in -2501 when the United States of America (in association with England and Japan) established a mining site near Copernicus for the express purpose of supporting the newly established Lagrange colonies in Earth orbit. Ore scooped from the lunar surface was sent by mass drivers to the L4 and L5 colonies to facilitate colony expansion without paying the high prices required to move raw materials out of Terra's gravity well.

Inevitably, the mining of surface materials from Luna became a major industry. Refining the materials before shipment proved cost-effective, but it also required a greater population to accomplish the task. By -2400, the lunar population had grown to 60,000 (nearly a third of the Lagrange colonies' populations).

The development of the jump drive by a joint venture of several companies working on Luna led to the establishment of the megacorporation GSbAG and several shipyards on Luna. Initially, the pace of production was slow, but contact with the First Imperium in -2407 sparked the Interstellar Wars and a period of wartime prosperity for both Luna and Gesichtkries. The presence of the mining and refining industry there helped make Luna an excellent place for the production of basic starship components such as struts, frames, and structural plates. It became a vital link in the warship manufacture and assembly process that was a standard part of the Terran economy during the 200 years of interstellar wars.

The money poured into Luna helped increase its population and its standard of living, while military defense measures made the colony self-sufficient of Terra. By the end of the wars in 2219, Luna was a full member of the Terran Confederation.

The end of the wars, however, brought economic depression to Luna because of the decline in production and service of starships. It had become a one-industry town and was now suffering the consequences. Hampered by lack of funds, Luna nevertheless began to diversify and compete with the Lagrange colonies for vacuum-processing contracts, high quality crystal production, and pharmaceutical development. Though the Lagranges had zero-G available, Luna made up for it with

its abundant resources. While the Lunar yards continued to produce starships, the expansion into other industries eventually restored prosperity to the colony.

**Military bases:** Luna has one active base on its surface, an Imperial Naval Base established in 1001 by the invading Imperials as a support base for the invasion of Terra. The Imperial base took over an existing Solomani naval base which had been in use for nearly 300 years.

The actual naval base occupies the crater Theophilus, near Mare Nectaris. A naval reservation around the base stretches from 10°north to 20°south, and from 20°east to 50°east, with access to the reservation prohibited without prior authorization. This reservation includes most of Mare Nectaris and the southern half of Mare Tranquillitatis.

Several abandoned military bases of various types remain on the lunar surface. A total of seventeen fighter pads established for the defense of the Imperial Naval Base have been abandoned; all lie within 400 km of the base. Some pads were converted to commercial or industrial uses; those within the naval reservation are guarded by automated security systems. An Imperial Marine protected forces training base occupied a section of the western wall of Mare Crisium from 1002 to 1060, but was closed because of force deployments by the Navy. The original base structures remain, stripped of all furnishings and equipment, and are now open to vacuum.

Rumors are told of scattered Solomani bases across the lunar surface, usually associated with Solomani Rim War activities. Limited library data suggests that some such bases may still exist as equipment caches or laboratories. A thorough search of the lunar surface by the Imperial Navy in 1080 failed to find any bases not already charted.

**Laboratory:** The Imperium maintains an extensive high-energy particle research laboratory in conjunction with the Naasirka megacorporation at Clavius. This laboratory was once devoted to the investigation of pi mesons, but has lately increased experimentation with ultra-high velocity baryons.

### **For the referee**

Although Luna is not in the mainstream of the Terra system's affairs (Earth outshines it considerably), quite a few adventuring possibilities still exist on the Moon. The material presented above should help create a basic adventuring background for player characters on Luna.

Players may interpret the information as they see fit, perhaps turning their attention to the terrorist Solomani Freedom Army (a bunch of crackpots, rather than a vital political force) or the research laboratory at Clavius. Whatever catches their imagination can be used to create adventuring situations with great potential for excitement.

Any adventure, however, should have several "pulls" (opportunities for adventures) and "pushes" (restrictions and adventuring hazards). The following suggestions are adaptable to most gaming situations.

**Pulls:** Many pulls are possible in adventures set on Luna. For example, GSbAG is an old, respected megacorporation with its origins on Terra and Luna. The archives of GSbAG are located on Luna (at Plato, in the custody of the University of Luna Library). Many of the items in the archives are papers that have never been computerized, and the information on them does not show up in computer-system Library Data. These original books and drawings are valuable as antiques to buffs who collect GSbAG memorabilia much as some people collect stamps, guns, or autographs.

The abandoned Imperial Marines base at Mare Crisium might still contain mothballed or overlooked equipment which could be plundered. While the equipment might not be in great quantity, it may include standard-issue military goods not available on the open market.

Mining is a major industry on Luna. The mines at the Montes Apenninus are old, and they may eventually run out. The new mines at Sinus Iridium have been opened, and still other mining sites may be discovered elsewhere.

**Pushes:** Prospecting is severely controlled on Luna by the preservationists, but illicit prospecting can bring in good money if the search turns up a good site and the prospector is not caught in forbidden territory. Being caught in proscribed territory can mean a substantial fine or even imprisonment.

Similarly, violators of local space traffic control are subject to warnings, fines, and possible restriction of travel by the

local authorities. Spacecraft cannot land at local pads without prior filing of flight plans and receipt of proper authority. Spacecraft in violation of these laws are subject to temporary seizure until a fine is paid and a search for contraband is performed.

Surface vehicles, either tracked or wheeled, are prohibited on the lunar surface unless a permit has been issued for them. Such permits are rarely issued and are never given for general use.

Private or rented grav vehicles are allowed only on specified gravways. Driving anywhere within ten kilometers of a gravway is considered a technical violation and merits a fine of only 1d6 x Cr100. Driving 10 kilometers or more away from a gravway is a criminal offense (the Preservationists at work!) and can result in up to one year in jail.

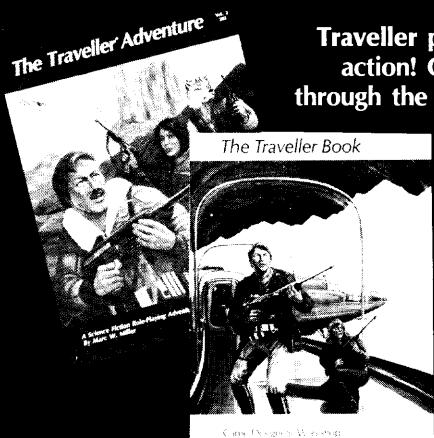
Laws are not the only pushes; local customs can be just as effective. Residential areas are isolated and insular. Visitors are rarely welcome unless invited, and may be forcefully expelled if they don't show reasonable pretexts for their presence.

Luna enjoys a unique position in the Terra system. Extraordinarily close to Terra, Luna has an environment of vacuum and raw materials set in a shallow gravity well. As a result, Luna is a major supplier of basic resources to the Lagrange colonies which orbit Terra. Competition with industrialized asteroids and the relatively low cost of anti-gravity has diminished Luna's economic role, but any loss of markets has been replaced by the need for locally produced manufactured goods.

Welcome to Luna!

A

## Put yourself in the story!

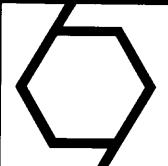


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# A Field Guide to Lunar Mutants

## *The macrobes and plants of Tycho Center*

by James M. Ward

In DRAGON® Magazine #86, the Moon of the GAMMA WORLD® game was described and adventuring suggestions for daring parties of explorers were given ("A World Gone Mad"). Six of the most commonly encountered mutant macrobes and plants of Tycho Center are presented below.



### Macrobes

NAME: Sword Macrobe

NUMBER: 2d8

MORALE: 10 (never retreats)

HIT DICE: 8d6

ARMOR: 3

LAND SPEED: 12/600/12

MS: 1d12      IN: 1d10

DX: 3d6      CH: 1d4

CN: 4d4      PS: 1d8+10

ATTACKS: See description

MUTATIONS: *Absorption (electrical)*, *Adaptation* (as per the plant's power), and *Anti-Life Leech*

DESCRIPTION: This creature has a meter-long body and a two-meter tentacle. The Sword Macrobe can sense any plant or warm-blooded creature along an unblocked line of sight up to 30 meters away; the moment it finds prey, the .4-meter-long end of the tentacle activates and has the exact properties of a Vibro Blade. The creature will then move towards its target and flail out with the energized tentacle. All plants and animals slain by this attack will be absorbed and eaten by the Sword Macrobe after the combat is finished. This creature will continue to attack as long as "food" is around. It will never attack any other bacterial lifeform.

NAME: Ball Macrobe

NUMBER: 2d12 chains

MORALE: 1d4+6

HIT DICE: 1d6 per "seed ball"

ARMOR: 2

LAND SPEED: Nil

MS: 1d4      IN: 1d4

DX: 18      CH: 1d4

CN: 2d6      PS: 5d4

ATTACKS: See description

MUTATIONS: *Explosive Seeds*, *Spore Cloud* (as per the plant's powers)

DESCRIPTION: The adult version of this bacteria appears to be a long chain of multi-colored balls each about .2 meters across; there can be up to one hundred balls on the chain. The entire chain is always in motion, swaying slowly back and forth from an anchoring point on a wall or floor. The bacteria is sensitive to all forms of movement in a 60-meter radius. Anything moving into this area will cause the plant to hurl the endmost pair of macrobe balls at it.

One of the balls will explode on contact, doing 6d6 damage to all within a 3-meter radius and giving off a poisonous spore cloud of variable intensity (3d6) filling the three-meter radius with spores (attacking victims as per the *Spore Cloud* mutation). The second ball will attach itself to the victim's person. If the victim dies, then the "seed ball" will feed on the dead creature and grow. All victims who survive the attack will easily be able to shed the seed and destroy it.

NAME: Eye Macrobe

NUMBER: 1d4

MORALE: 1d6+4

HIT DICE: 6d6

ARMOR: 4

LAND SPEED: Nil

MS: 1d6+12      IN: 1d6+12

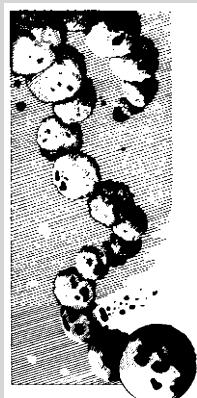
DX: 1d10+2      CH: 1d4

CN: 4d4      PS: 1d4

ATTACKS: See description

MUTATIONS: *Absorption (electrical)*; triple power and range for the following mutations: *Telepathy*, *Telekinesis*, *Life Leech*, *Repulsion Field*

DESCRIPTION: This macrobe is about two meters long and will always be found growing on a wall near an electrical power source. It is very intelligent and serves as sort of a gardener for the rest of the macrobe colony. Using its mutations, it places new growths of bacteria in areas where they will grow and become useful to the whole colony. This mu-



tant has also been known to coordinate attacks against plants and robotic beings, and would attack animals and humans as well. Although it cannot move, it will get other macrobes to carry it from one chamber to another, so long as the chambers are secure from attack. The Eye Macrobe is rarely found at the forefront of any plant-bacteria battle.

## Plants

NAME: Coner

NUMBER: 1d20

MORALE: 1d4+5

HIT DICE: 4d12

ARMOR: 3

LAND SPEED: Nil

MS: 1d6 IN: 1d4

DX: 3d4 CH: 1d4

CN: 3d4 PS: 3d4

ATTACKS: See description

MUTATIONS: *Explosive Seeds, New Body Parts, Increased Sense (hearing), Shorter*

DESCRIPTION: This new mutant stands about one meter tall at full growth. It can grow on a solid metal floor if it can connect its root system to water and food sources within 30 meters of the parent plant. It reproduces by shooting its cones towards moving targets of any type that it senses with its acute hearing organs within 45 meters. Its first attack is to shoot explosive "energy cones" doing 1d20 points of electrical damage to whatever they hit (this damage is doubled if the plant can "plug" itself into an electrical power source in the local environment through its roots).

If the target dies or stops moving, the Coner shoots out a "tendril cone" connected to the parent plant by a thin cord. This seed will slowly sprout, its roots consuming the body of the target within two days; then it becomes a full-grown Coner and can either draw off the parent plant for water or find its own source. At least 30 energy cones may be found on a plant at any given time, and they take only two hours to grow back after being fired.

NAME: Rosoid

NUMBER: 1d4

MORALE: 1d6+4

HIT DICE: 18d6

ARMOR: 2

LAND SPEED: 12/600/12

MS: 3d6 IN: Variable

DX: 3d4 CH: 3d4

CN: 2d4+10 PS: 6d6

ATTACKS: Physical blow does 2d20

MUTATIONS: *Total Carapace, Throwing Thorns, Modified Leaves, Mobility*

DESCRIPTION: These mutant plants have

## Rosoid thorns are coated with a poisonous and acidic sap.

humanoid shapes, and each walks about on two leglike stalks. All of their appendages are thickly wrapped in thorn vines and are covered in small rose flowers. Adult Rosoids are 3 meters tall and are very strong.

The color of a Rosoid's roses determines how intelligent it is and what it will most likely attack. The yellow Rosoid is the most intelligent variety (IN: 2d6+6) and can use technological items of all types in its manipulative "hands." The red Rosoid has a low intelligence (IN: 2d4) and has been bred to attack robots of any type within sighting range (10 meters). The pink Rosoid is not very intelligent (IN: 1d6), but can sense the presence of macrobes within 15 meters of it and will instantly attack this lifeform regardless of the circumstances. The white Rosoid is the least intelligent type (IN: 1d4) and rarely leaves its original growing area. This plant will act to protect all other plants within its area and will attack all opponents by throwing its thorns (an attack all the types have).

Rosoid thorns are coated with a poisonous and acidic sap (intensity 13 poison). If the poison doesn't kill the attacker, the 1d10 of acid damage may do the trick. A Rosoid can throw 1d6 thorns each melee round.

NAME: Shooter

NUMBER: 1d20

MORALE: 1d4+6

HIT DICE: 10d6

ARMOR: 8

LAND SPEED: Nil

MS: 1d4 IN: 1d4

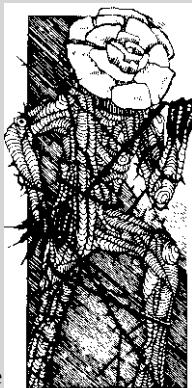
DX: 3d4 CH: 1d4

CN: 4d4 PS: 3d4

ATTACKS: See description

MUTATIONS: *New Body Parts, Throwing Thorns, Texture Change, Taller*

DESCRIPTION: This mutant dandelion stands one meter tall and has changed greatly from its parent stock. Instead of one flower it has up to one hundred (10d10). Each bright yellow flower is composed of hard, razor-sharp petals. The plant attacks living material by shooting the flowers from their stalks, doing 3d10 points of damage to any solid object they hit; double damage is done against unarmored targets (AC 10). In the presence of moisture (like blood) the flower softens and becomes a seed that will grow in hours if left undisturbed. The Shooter can fire two flowers per melee round and can sense life forms up to fifty meters away.



# Star Questions

*Questions, answers, and advice on the UNIVERSE™ game*

by Roger E. Moore

**StarQuestions takes a look at the UNIVERSE™ science-fiction game in this issue. The UNIVERSE game system was developed by SPI in 1981, and a number of gamers still use and enjoy the system. If you have some questions or comments about the UNIVERSE game, just write them down and send them in to StarQuestions, Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.**

Q: What new scenarios and articles are being produced for the UNIVERSE role-playing game? How can I get copies of the DELTAVEE™ space combat system for that game?

A: Since TSR, Inc., acquired SPI, a number of articles have appeared in print about the UNIVERSE game system, and more articles are in the works for the future. ARESTM Magazine contained the following articles:

Issue #12: The STAR TRADER™ game, fully compatible with the UNIVERSE game system; UNIVERSE game Comm Link column.

Issue #13: "STAR TRADER Game Enhanced" tells how to add corruption, piracy, and other nice things to the game in #12; UNIVERSE game Comm Link column.

Special Edition #1: "First Contacts," giving the first alien race in the UNIVERSE game, the Sh'k'tlp. This long article includes a history of the 24th Century contact between Humanity and Sh'k'tlp, a system for generating alien characters in detail, and discussions of alien psychology, society, and technology.

Issue #17: "Mongoose and Cobra" game module, with description of the Chara star system; "The Federation Strikes Back!" presented new pods, starships, and scenarios for the

DELTAVEE space combat game.

The DELTAVEE game appeared in ARES Magazine #9, and should still be available through mail-order or retail hobby shops.

Q: What unpublished UNIVERSE game material does TSR, Inc., have on hand?

A: Several UNIVERSE game articles are awaiting publication in the ARESTM Section on a variety of topics. In addition, much of the "First Contacts" material is still on hand, but is so long that it might prove difficult to squeeze into the section without cutting it down a bit. If reader reaction is strong enough (send in those letters, UNIVERSE game fans!) then we'll go ahead and start running it.

The "First Contacts" material includes at least two new alien races

and an adventure in which contact can be established between some of the races. We also have the sad tale of Miriam Al-Rikfeld and Zz'rbtz the Sh'k'tlp. More about that one later.

Q: What do the interiors of some of the star? I need to know this in order to resolve gun battles aboard ship.

A: Unfortunately, you are on your own with this question. If anyone wants to send in an article on this topic, we'd like to see it. A number of readers wanted to know what the inside of starships and starship pods in the UNIVERSE game look like.

Q: Where can I find more information on the stars and planetary systems listed on the Interstellar Display?

A: A good physics and astronomy

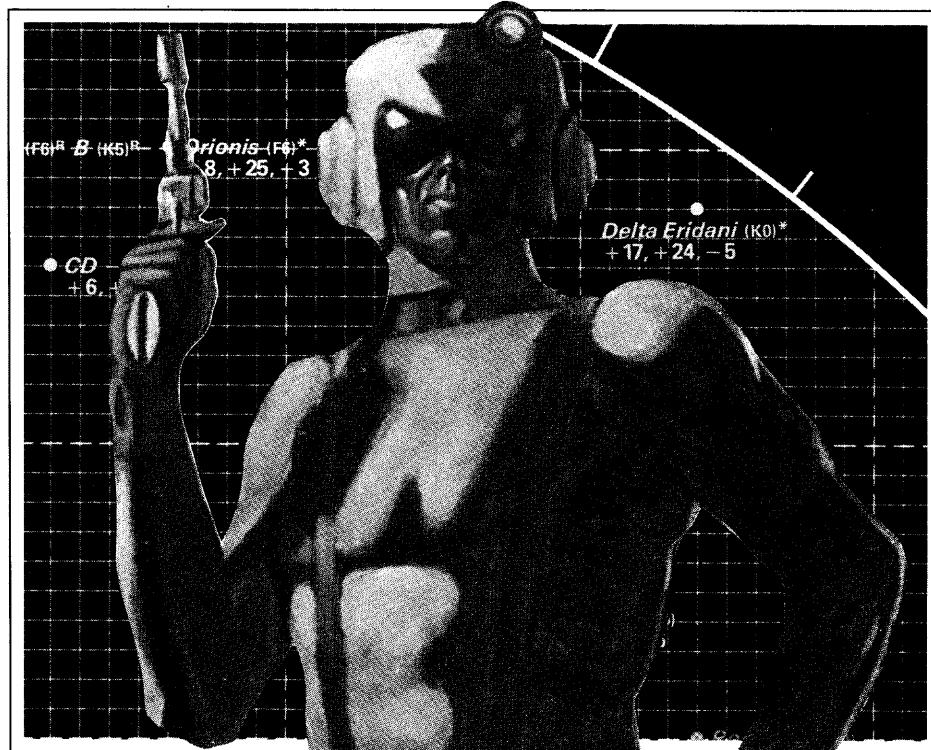
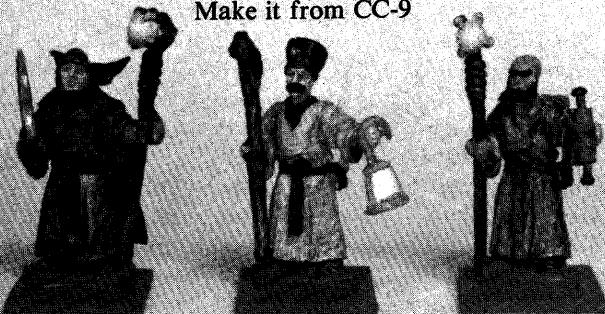


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library at an observatory or college campus should provide you with quite a few useful details. An article describing some nearby stars is being considered for the ARES Section and may appear here in the future. It should be noted here that as of this date (1984) no other planetary systems besides our own have been authenticated, and planetary systems listed in the UNIVERSE game (aside from our own) are fictional.

Q: Some of the stars on the game's Interstellar Display have very peculiar names. Are there really stars named Cincinnati, Jim/Joe, Chara, and The Flying Star?

A: Apparently so. The above names were taken from actual star catalogs when the display was being developed; it was felt that using names such as these, rather than some catalog designation like AOe 17415-6 or BD+32° A, would add more interest to such systems. Would you like to call your local sun a string of numbers, or would you like to call it Cincinnati?

As to why anyone would want to

name a star Cincinnati, remember that astronomers are human, too. The asteroids in our own Solar System have been named after everything from astronomer's wives to the National Geographic Magazine (asteroid Geographos).

Q: Under "Accidents" [section 38.1], a meteor storm is listed as occurring in outer space. How is this possible?

A: What the phrase refers to is a loose cloud of rocky debris, usually the leftover remains of a comet which has lost all of its gaseous components. Small clusters of these rocks, stones, and dust particles form a hazard to interplanetary travel; several satellites in real life are thought to have suffered damage from meteor collisions.

By the way, there is a difference between meteoroids (the rocky objects in space), meteorites (the rocky objects after they've entered a planet's atmosphere), and meteors (which are either meteoroids or the bright streak of light that a meteorite leaves when passing through an atmosphere). ▲

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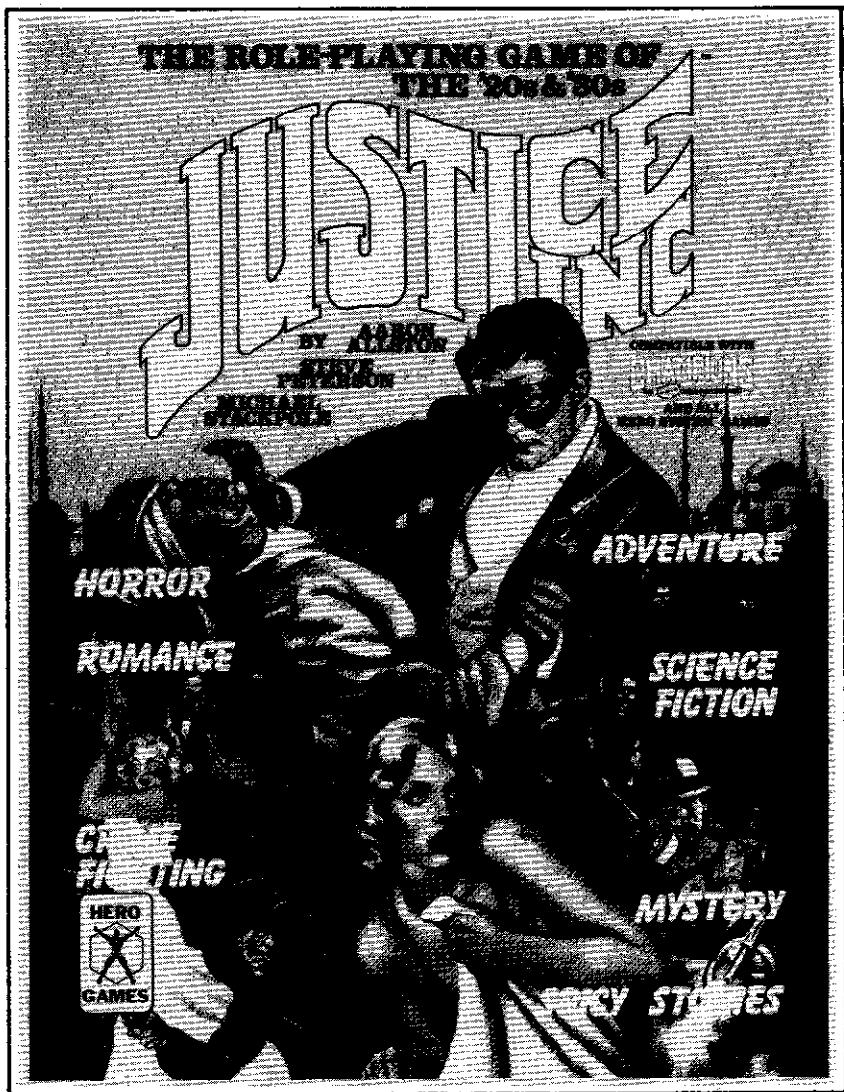
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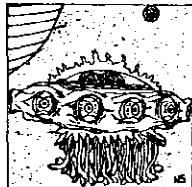
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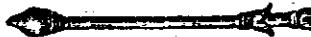


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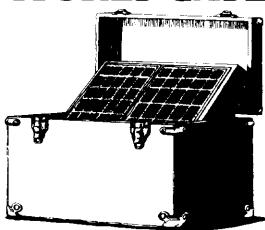
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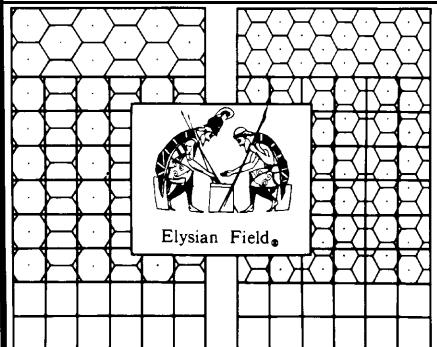
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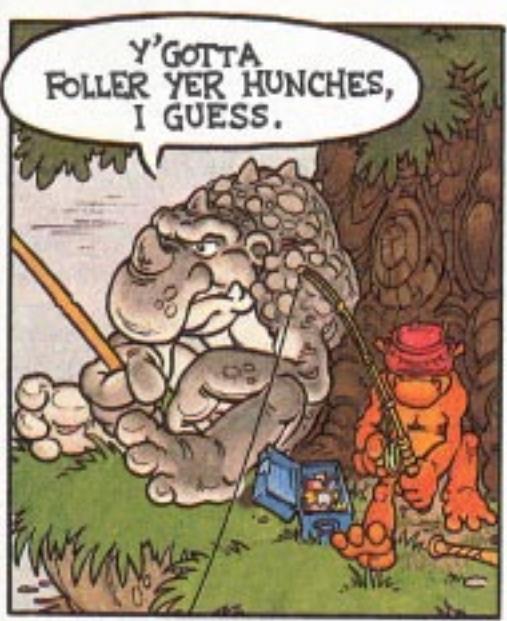
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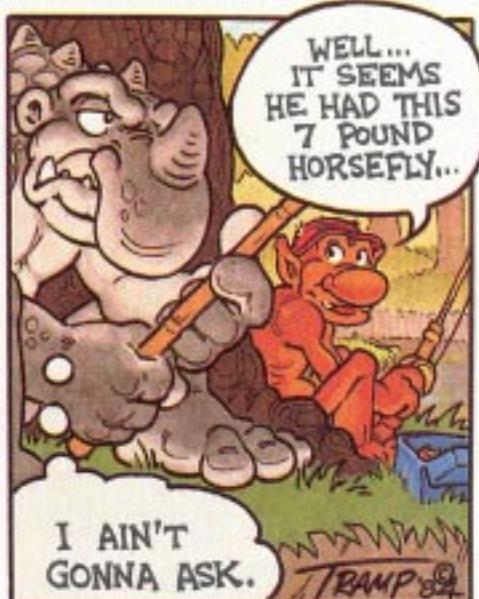
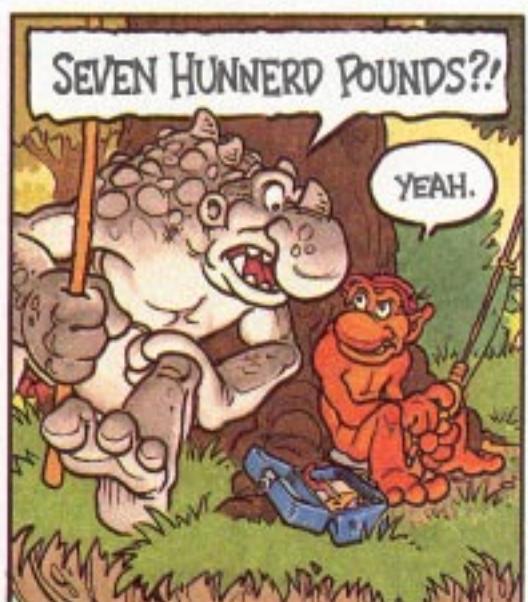
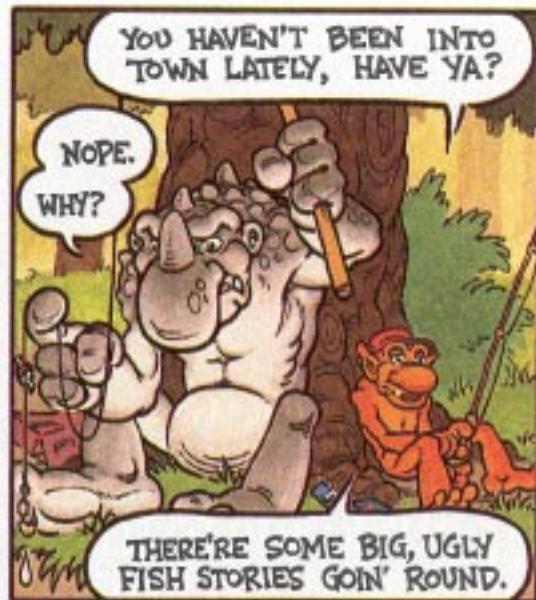
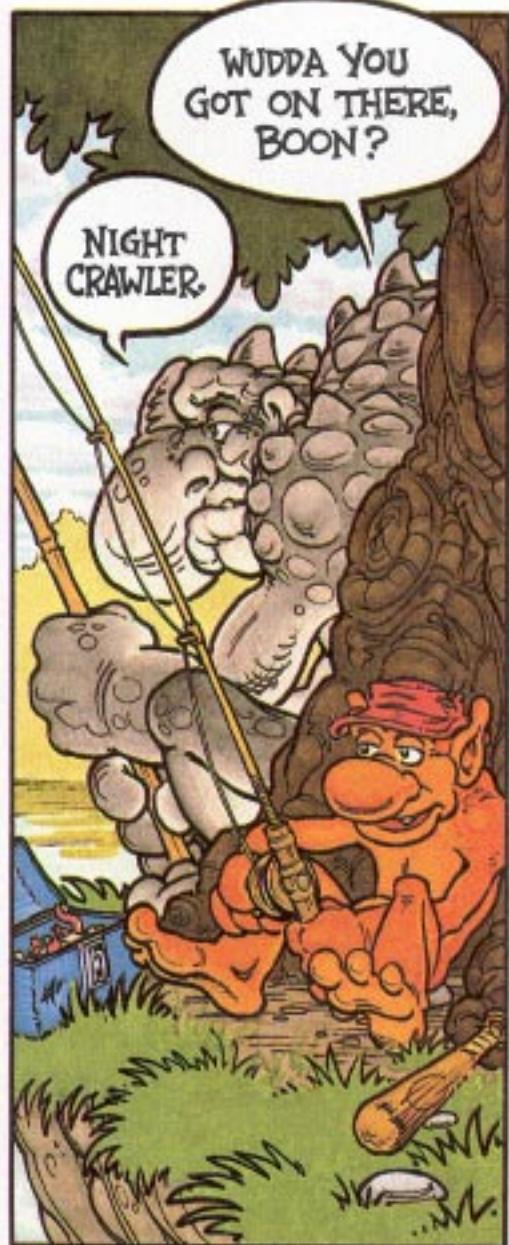
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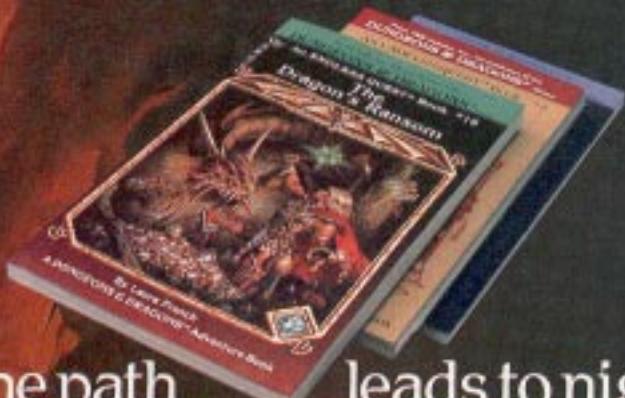
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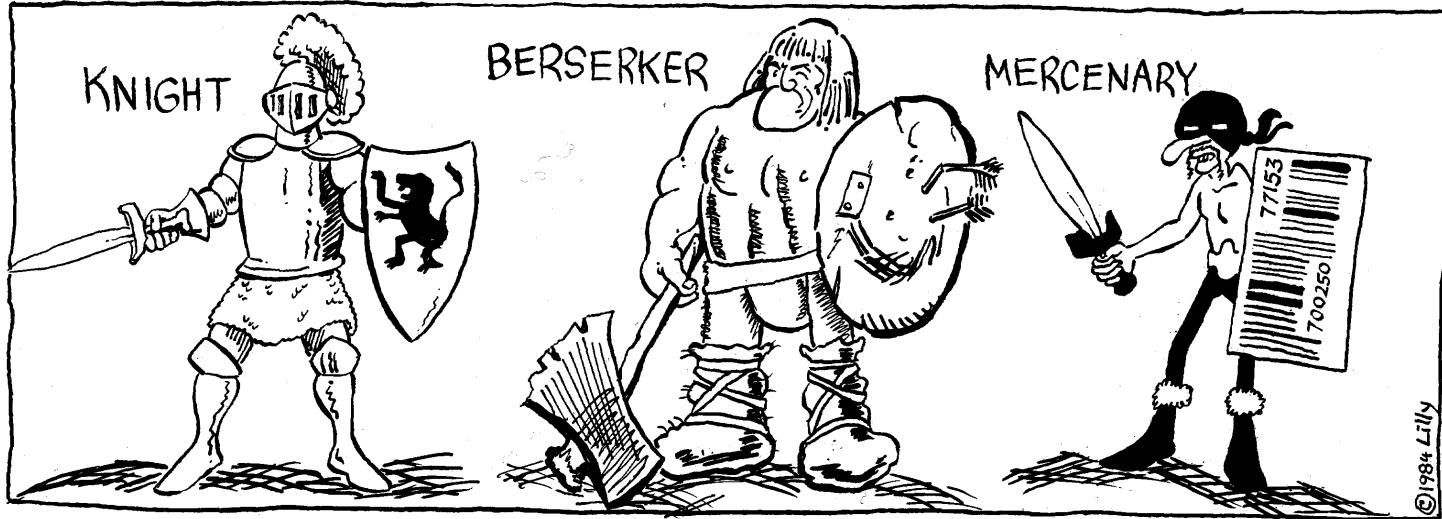
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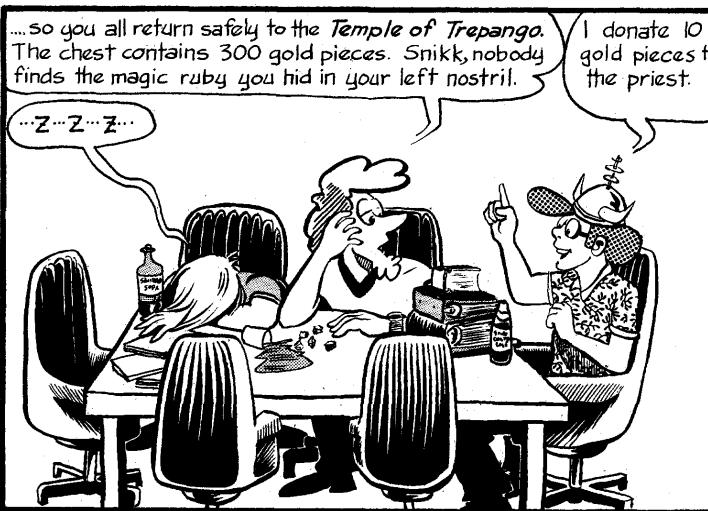
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# SNARFQUEST

#12

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WAIT, ETHEAH, LET  
GEEZEL HAVE A WISH  
TOO... ME HELPED  
GET YER WAND BACK!

YOU DID?

HEY, ME NOT STUPID  
LIKE DEY ARE... ME  
NOT WASTE MY WISH!

OK - OK,  
MAKE A  
WISH.

OH THANK YOU, THANK YOU...  
I WISH...

GEEZ, WISH  
FOR GOLD  
AN' JEWELS...  
TONS OF 'EM!

NO!... WISH THAT I WAS A  
HUMAN, 'CAUSE I AM, REALLY, I'M  
NOT A RAT!

NO! HE LOOKS  
FINE AS A RAT.

WISH FOR RICHES-  
RICHES FOR US ALL!!!

SNARF, I'LL KILL YOU! HEY,  
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM!

IF YOU WISH ME  
BACK AS A HUMAN,  
I'LL GIVE YOU RICHES  
WHEN I INHERIT MY  
THRONE!

GAG!

HE LIES! DON'T BELIEVE HIM!  
YOU'LL WASTE YER WISH!

HMUMPH!

WISH FOR GOLD,  
RUBIES, TREASURES,  
AN' DEN YA CAN BUY  
ANYTHING WE WANT.  
DO IT! WISH-WISH!

OH! YOU GUYS, I JUS' WI...  
(MUFFLE CHOKE)

SHUT UP!

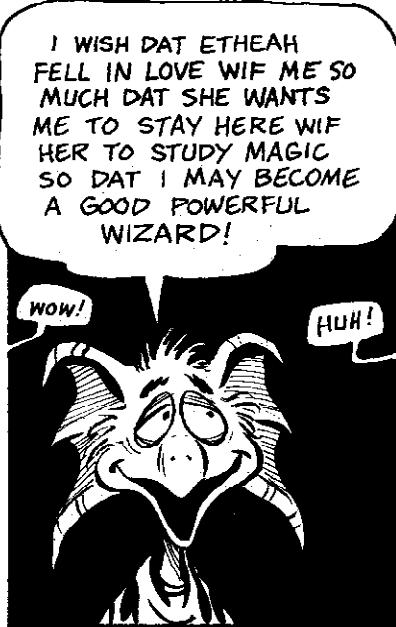
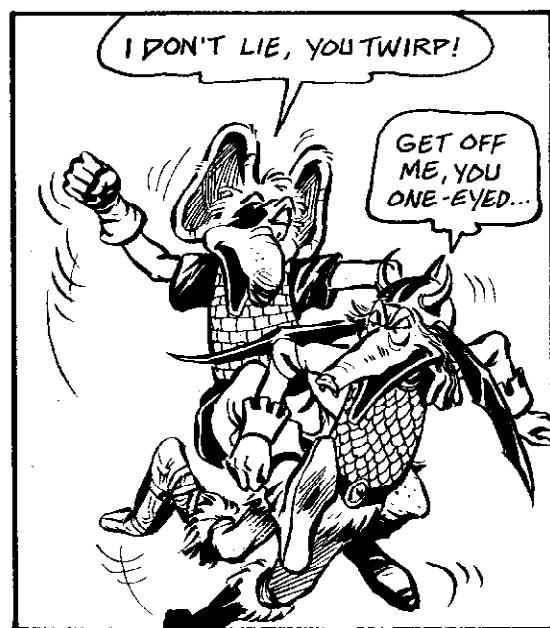
YOU WERE GONNA SAY,  
"I JUS' WISH YOU GUYS  
WOULD SHUT UP..."... RIGHT?

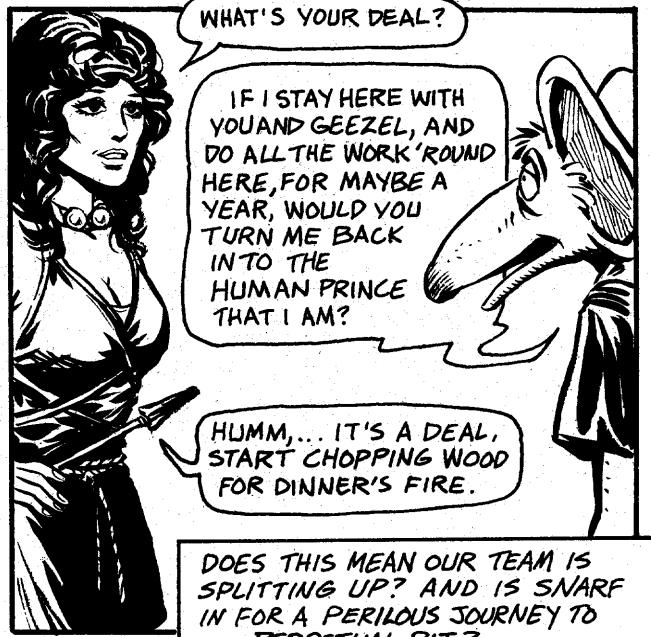
WELL,... YES.

SEE, I SAVED  
YER WISH FOR  
YA... YOU OWE ME.

OH GAAA... SEE!... SEE!  
YOU GUYS ALMOST MADE ME  
WASTE MY WISH!







# BUG-EYED MONSTERS

## They Want Our Women!

On silent grav sleds, the alien creatures slide through the forest, readying their lasers and stunners, drooling slightly in anticipation. They choose their first target: a little clapboard house nestled in the woods above town. They attack. The sounds of lasers and stunners are soon met by cries of fear and rage. Wild with lust, they fail to notice when one human makes it to a car and careens away to rouse the citizenry of the small town against the alien threat.

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BUG-EYED MONSTERS is the new West End release by Greg Costikyan, designer of the successful *Creature That Ate Sheboygan*.<sup>TM</sup> In this game, Greg returns to the "Creature" genre, bringing a flying saucer with menacing monsters to the quiet remote American town of Freedom, New Hampshire.

One player, as the monster, must attempt to kidnap the earthling women (the most beautiful in the universe). The other player must rally the citizens of the town to

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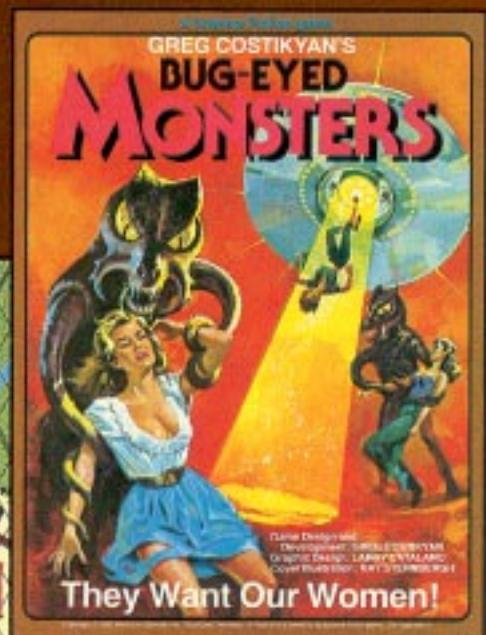
Greg Costikyan is the designer of nine published games, including THE CREATURE THAT ATE SHEBOYGAN,<sup>TM</sup> SWORDS AND SORCERY,<sup>TM</sup> DEATH MAZE,<sup>TM</sup> RETURN OF THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT,<sup>TM</sup> and TRAIL BLAZER.<sup>TM</sup>

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 Solitaire Suitability: Low  
 Players: Two  
 Game Scale: Individual Person  
 Playing Time: An hour or less for experienced gamers



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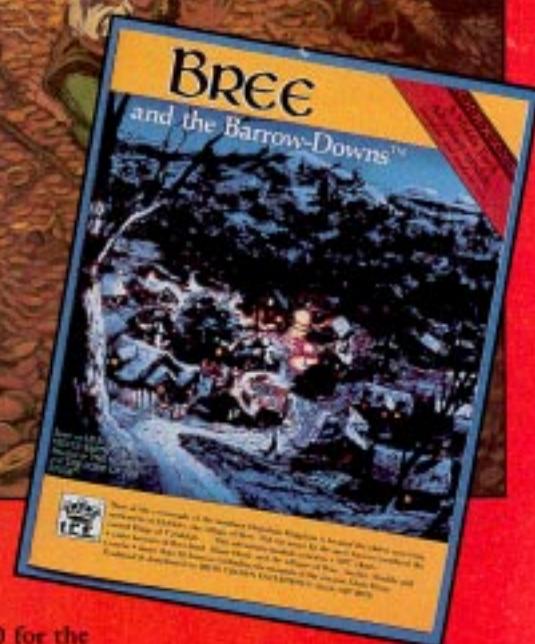
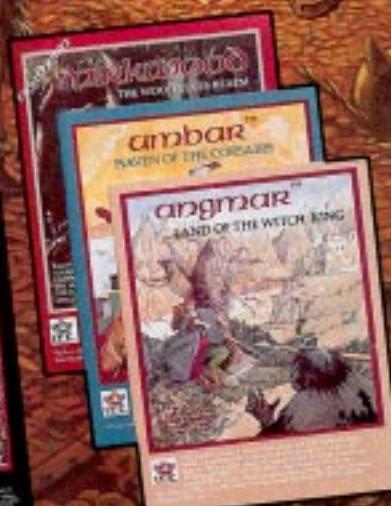
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